

# **INTRODUCTION**

## Capping-Phrase Practice in Japanese Rinzai Zen

RINZAI KŌAN PRACTICE, as it is presently conducted in the Rinzai monasteries of Japan, involves an element of literary study. Zen monks all have books. They need them to support their kōan practice, and the further they progress, the more their practice involves the study of texts and the writing of words. The Zen school, however, describes itself as “not founded on words and letters, a separate tradition outside scripture.” Much of traditional Zen literature heaps ridicule on the idea that one can comprehend or express Zen by means of written explanations. Take, for example, the striking metaphor of Rinzai Gigen, the founder of the Rinzai school:

There’s a bunch of fellows who can’t tell good from bad but poke around in the scriptural teachings, hazard a guess here and there, and come up with an idea in words, as though they took a lump of shit, mushed it around in their mouth, and then spat it out and passed it on to somebody else. (WATSON 1993B: 61)

Standard images like “do not mistake the finger for the moon” remind the Zen practitioner not to confuse the label with the labeled, the descriptions that point to awakening with the experience of awakening itself. Poetic images like “the mute has had a wonderful dream” express the fact that even the most eloquent person can find no words with which to express the wondrous experience of awakening. Zen teachers also recount stories like that of Tokusan, the scholar of the *Diamond Sutra*, who burned all his previously precious books after he attained awakening (MMK case 28). Why then do Japanese Rinzai monks study books as part of their kōan practice? What books do they study? How can the study of such books be compatible with the struggle to attain the awakening that is beyond language?

Rinzai monasteries in Japan vary in the way they conduct kōan practice, but in the Myōshin-ji–Daitoku-ji branch, when a monk has passed a kōan the Zen teacher will instruct him to bring a “capping phrase,” called *jakugo* 着語/著語 or *agyō* 下語. The monk selects a verse or phrase that expresses the insight he has had while meditating on the kōan. He searches for this capping phrase in one of the several Zen phrase books that have been especially compiled for this purpose. If the monk continues

into advanced stages of the Rinzai Zen kōan curriculum, he will receive further literary assignments: the writing of explanations in Japanese, called *kakiwake* (書き分け or 書き譯), and the composition of Chinese-style poetry, called *nenrō* 拈弄. Such literary study is not merely an incidental part of kōan training. Monks begin capping-phrase assignments with Jōshū’s “Mu,” one of the very first kōan, and continue searching for capping phrases throughout their entire training career. The research and writing required to complete *kakiwake* and *nenrō* writing assignments can consume considerable amounts of time during the later stages of a monk’s stay in the monastery. If the point of kōan practice is to attain a nonrational, direct insight beyond the boundaries of language and conceptual thought, why is there such literary study in kōan practice? How can *jakugo* practice even be possible in Zen?

My aim in these introductory chapters is not only to describe the *jakugo* practice, but also to explain in general how the practice of meditative insight can be combined with literary study. I will also speculate on how this very interesting Zen practice evolved out of more general practices in Chinese literary culture.

Chapter 1 is more philosophical in tone and discusses the nature of kōan practice. It follows conventional accounts in emphasizing that “passing a kōan” initially involves an experience of insight for which intellectual understanding is neither a substitute nor an aid. At the same time, it argues that there is such a thing as intellectual understanding of the kōan, but it is dependent on the prior experience of insight into the kōan.

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the Rinzai kōan curriculum using the categories of Hakuin’s kōan system.

Chapter 3 describes the capping-phrase practice and its importance to both Rinzai kōan practice and to the structure of kōan texts.

Chapter 4 describes the Chinese “literary game” and argues that many of the elements that go into making up the complex image of a kōan—hidden meaning, sudden insight, mind-to-mind transmission, etc.—are features that have been borrowed or adapted from that tradition.

Chapter 5 describes the Zen phrase book, a group of texts that forms its own subgenre among Zen texts. In addition to a short history of the origin of the Zen phrase book, a more detailed, analytical account is presented of the five texts used to support the capping-phrase practice.

Chapter 6 explains the parts of the phrase entries, and also outlines the abbreviations and conventions used in this book.

# 1

## The Nature of the Rinzai Kōan Practice

D. T. SUZUKI'S EARLY works (notably his *Essays in Zen Buddhism Second Series*, 1953) and MIURA and SASAKI'S *Zen Dust* (1966) were for a very long time the only major resources available in non-Asian languages for research into the Zen kōan. In recent years, however, a rich bounty of material has appeared. At the level of basic texts, in addition to a steady stream of translations of the traditional "recorded sayings" of the Zen masters from which kōan cases were originally derived,<sup>1</sup> numerous kōan collections, some of them newly created in the West, have also been published in translation.<sup>2</sup> At the scholarly level, major philosophical and historical studies on the nature and development of the kōan have appeared.<sup>3</sup> Despite all these efforts, there is still no philosophical agreement on the nature of the kōan, and indeed little factual information on the actual conduct of kōan practice. Before we attempt to describe the capping-phrase practice, we need a clear picture of the Rinzai kōan practice in general.

### A RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

To begin with, like all Buddhist practices, Rinzai kōan practice is religious in nature. This point seems to be forgotten in current accounts. Popular descriptions of the kōan as "riddles" or "paradoxes" make it seem as if the Zen practitioner is interested in little more than the solving of intellectual puzzles. Those interested in enhancing the spontaneity of athletic or artistic performance tend to focus on Zen as a training technique for attaining a state of consciousness in which "the dancer is one with the dance" (GALLWEY 1974, SUDNOW 1978). Scholars who study Zen as a language game give the impression that the practitioner is basically learning a new set of

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<sup>1</sup> SASAKI et al. 1971, SASAKI 1975, HOFFMAN 1978, POWELL 1986, PAS 1987, BRAVERMAN 1989, CHIEN 1992, WATSON 1993B, APP 1994, GREEN 1998.

<sup>2</sup> SENZAKI and McCANDLESS 1964, SHIBAYAMA 1974, HOFFMAN 1977, SEKIDA 1977, CLEARY and CLEARY 1977, AITKEN 1990, CLEARY 1990, SAHN 1993, CLEARY 1993, LOORI 1994, CLEARY 1998.

<sup>3</sup> BUSWELL 1987, HEINE 1994 and 1999, WRIGHT 1998, HEINE and WRIGHT 2000.

rules for language (SELLMAN 1979, WRIGHT 1992). Others insist that the notion of religious experience (PROUDFOOT 1985) or Zen experience (SHARF 1995A, 1995B) is a concept manufactured and manipulated for ideological reasons, depicting the practitioner as primarily engaged in some form or other of cultural politics. Critics who suggest that the kōan is a form of “scriptural exegesis” (SHARF 1995A, 108) give the impression that the Zen kōan practice differs little from scholarship in general. These kinds of interpretations of Zen practice are misleading at best. The kōan practice is first and foremost a religious practice, undertaken primarily not in order to solve a riddle, not to perfect the spontaneous performance of some skill, not to learn a new form of linguistic expression, not to play cultural politics, and not to carry on scholarship. Such ingredients may certainly be involved, but they are always subservient to the traditional Buddhist goals of awakened wisdom and selfless compassion.

In saying this, I am making a normative statement, not a description of fact. The fact is, in most Rinzai monasteries today, many of the monks engage in meditation and kōan practice for a mere two or three years in order to qualify for the status of *jūshoku* 住職 (resident priest), which will allow them to assume the role of a temple priest. For many of them, engagement with the kōan may indeed consist in little more than the practice of solving riddles and learning a ritualized language, a fraction of the full practice. In the full practice the Zen practitioner must bring to the engagement the three necessities of the Great Root of Faith, the Great Ball of Doubt, and the Great Overpowering Will (*daishinkon* 大信根, *daigidan* 大疑團, *daijunshi* 大憤志).<sup>4</sup> The kōan is an artificial problem given by a teacher to a student with the aim of precipitating a genuine religious crisis that involves all the human faculties—intellect, emotion, and will.

At first, one’s efforts and attention are focused on the kōan. When it cannot be solved (one soon learns that there is no simple “right answer”), doubt sets in. Ordinary doubt is directed at some external object such as the kōan itself or the teacher, but when it has been directed back to oneself, it is transformed into Great Doubt. To carry on relentlessly this act of self-doubt, one needs the Great Root of Faith. Ordinarily, faith and doubt are related to one another in inverse proportion: where faith is strong, doubt is weak; and vice versa. But in Zen practice, the greater the doubt, the greater the faith. Great Faith and Great Doubt are two aspects of the same mind of awakening (*bodaishin* 菩提心). The Great Overpowering Will is needed to surmount all obstacles along the way. Since doubt is focused on oneself, no matter how strong,

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<sup>4</sup> These terms are most strongly associated with Hakuin Ekaku Zenji but they appear as a trio in the *Kōhō Oshō zen’yō* 高峯和尚禪要 (Ch. *Kao Feng Ho-shang Ch’an-yao*, ZZ 2; MZZ 122.714) published in 1599, almost a century before Hakuin was born (1686). There is a philosophical discussion in NISHITANI 1982, 18–30. The connection of Great Doubt to awakening was emphasized by Ta-hui Tsung-kao (大慧宗杲 J. Daie Sōkō, 1089–163).

wily, and resourceful one is in facing the opponent, that opponent (oneself) is always just as strong, wily, and resourceful in resisting. When self-doubt has grown to the point that one is totally consumed by it, the usual operations of mind cease. The mind of total self-doubt no longer classifies intellectually, no longer arises in anger or sorrow, no longer exerts itself as will and ego. This is the state that Hakuin described as akin to being frozen in a great crystal:

Suddenly a great doubt manifested itself before me. It was as though I were frozen solid in the midst of an ice sheet extending tens of thousands of miles. A purity filled my breast and I could neither go forward nor retreat. To all intents and purposes I was out of my mind and the *Mu* alone remained. Although I sat in the Lecture Hall and listened to the Master's lecture, it was as though I were hearing from a distance outside the hall. At times, I felt as though I were floating through the air. (*Orategama III*, YAMPOLSKY 1971, 118)

In this state, Hakuin happened one day to hear the temple bell ring. At that moment the ice shattered and he was thrust back into the world. In this experience, called the Great Death (*daishi ichiban* 大死一番), the self in self-doubt is finally extinguished and the Great Doubt is transformed into Great Awakening. As Ta-hui says, "Beneath the Great Doubt, always there is a Great Awakening 大疑之下必有大悟."<sup>5</sup>

*Kenshō*, the experience of awakening, is more than merely the state of concentrated *samādhi*. When the Great Doubt has totally taken over the self, there is no more distinction between self and other, subject and object. There is no more differentiation, no more attachment. This is merely *samādhi* and not *kenshō*. *Kenshō* is not the self's withdrawal from the conventional world, but rather the selfless self breaking back into the conventional world. It is only when this *samādhi* has been shattered that a new self arises. This self returns and again sees the things of the world as objects, but now as empty objects; it again thinks in differentiated categories and feels attachment, but now with insight into their emptiness.

Again, I am speaking in normative terms. The particular aspects of Zen kōan practice on which scholars have concentrated their attentions—its nondual epistemology, its ritual and performance, its language, its politics—are aspects. They are facets of a practice whose fundamental core is a religious practice.

#### KŌAN: INSTRUMENT OR REALIZATION?

Most commentators take the approach that the kōan is an *upāya*, an instrument, that deliberately poses a problem unsolvable by the rational mind in order to drive the mind beyond the limits of rationality and intellectual cognition. This approach views the kōan as a psychological technique cunningly designed to

<sup>5</sup> 大慧語錄, T 47.886a28.

cause the rational and intellectual functions of mind to self-destruct, thus liberating the mind to the vast realm of the nonrational and the intuitive. Powerful personal accounts of spiritual quest make it seem that the kōan is not a text to be studied for its meaning as one would study an essay or a poem, but rather an existential explosive device with language merely serving as the fuse.

Part of the problem with many such instrumentalist approaches is that it deprives the kōan itself of meaning. The kōan, it is said, cannot be understood intellectually; it gives the appearance of being meaningful only to seduce the meaning-seeking mind to engage with it (ROSEMONT 1970). This interpretation ignores the mass of evidence contradicting the idea that the kōan is no more than a meaningless, blunt psychological instrument. It is hard to think that the shelves of heavy volumes of kōan commentary produced through the centuries and the lectures in which Zen teachers expound at length on the kōan are all occupied with a technique that is in itself nonsense. It is much more sensible to begin from the assumption that kōan disclose their own meaning (though not necessarily an intellectual one), once they have been properly understood.

A second difficulty is that in trying to demonstrate how the kōan overcomes the dualisms and false dichotomies created by the conventional mind, the instrumental approach introduces dualism and dichotomy back into the picture again. The awakened mind, it is said, has transcended the dualistic dichotomizing of conventional mind and resides in a state of nonduality. The awakened person is thus freer than the average person in being able to choose to act either in the conventional dualistic way or in the awakened nondual way. But the dichotomy between duality and nonduality, conventional thinking and awakened mind, is itself a duality. Rather than being free from dualistic thinking, the awakened mind ends up more tightly locked into dualistic thinking, incessantly forced to choose between being conventional or being awakened.<sup>6</sup>

A much better way of approaching the kōan is by way of the “realizational” model, a term I have borrowed from Hee-jin KIM (1985). The practitioner does not solve the kōan by grasping intellectually the meaning of “the sound of one hand” or “original face before father and mother were born.” Rather, in the crisis of self-doubt referred to above, one experiences the kōan not as an object standing before the mind that investigates it, but as the seeking mind itself. As long as consciousness and kōan oppose each other as subject and object, there are still two hands clapping, mother and father have already been born. But when the kōan has overwhelmed the mind so that it is no longer the object but the seeking subject itself, subject and object are no longer two. This is “one hand clapping,” the point “before father and mother have been born.” This entails a “realization” in the two senses of the term. By making real,

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<sup>6</sup> I have borrowed this point from WRIGHT 1992.

i.e., by actually *becoming* an example of, the nonduality of subject and object, the practitioner also realizes, i.e., *cognitively understands*, the kōan. The realization of understanding depends on the realization of making actual.<sup>7</sup>

This realizational account of the kōan solves several problems. On the one hand, it helps explain how the solution to a kōan requires the personal experience of “the sound of one hand” or of “one’s original face.” On the other, it allows us to see the kōan as not merely a blunt and meaningless instrument, useful only as means to some further end, but as possessed of a meaningful content of its own which can be apprehended intellectually.<sup>8</sup>

#### “ZEN EXPERIENCE”

If an instrumentalist approach deemphasizes the meaning of the kōan and overemphasizes the experiential aspect, there are scholars on the other end of the spectrum with the opposite approach. Robert Sharf, for example, writes:

The kōan genre, far from serving as a means to obviate reason, is a highly sophisticated form of scriptural exegesis: the manipulation or “solution” of a particular kōan traditionally demanded an extensive knowledge of canonical Buddhist doctrine and classical Zen verse. (SHARF 1995A, 108)

In claiming that the solving of a kōan is an exercise in scriptural exegesis, Sharf also argues against the traditional claim that one must necessarily have a *kenshō* experience before one can understand Zen. His position is that the idea of a *kenshō* experience has been manufactured and manipulated for ideological purposes by Buddhist modernists (SHARF 1995A, 1995B, 1995C). While it is not possible in this essay to deal with all the details of his position, I feel it necessary to comment on the principal question at stake here.

What does it mean to say that Zen can only be known by experience? The term “experience” needs examination. The ordinary question, “Have you had any experience of living in a foreign country?” usually means nothing more than “Have you ever lived in a foreign country?” “Having experience of” is a loose idiom for describing things one has done or undergone. In a more academic context, however, “experience” has at least two specialized meanings, that are often confused with one another. We may distinguish them as Experience 1: learning or knowing firsthand; and Experience 2: having pure consciousness.

Experience 1 does not entail any epistemological claims about the nature of experience. It simply denies that what is known has been known secondhand, relying on

<sup>7</sup> I have borrowed this point about the two senses of “realize” from NISHITANI 1982, 5–6.

<sup>8</sup> I have discussed these questions in greater detail in HORI 2000.



someone else's account. This idea is at work, for instance, in the question, "How do you know it is hot in Indonesia? Have you experienced it for yourself or have you just heard about it from another?" Experience 2, in contrast, does make epistemological claims about the nature of experience. It presupposes a distinction between the rational and the intuitive, the intellectual and nonintellectual, the cognitive and the noncognitive. Its adjective form, "experiential," connotes all these—intuitive, non-intellectual, noncognitive. To experience something in this sense means to have a direct apprehension without any intellectual or conceptual activity. The experience is "pure" precisely to the extent that there is no intellection or conceptualization going on. This idea is at work in the claim, for example, that "mystical experience is not something you attain by thinking. You have to experience it." Although both thinking and experiencing are first-hand, only the latter can be said to be pure.

If "not founded on words and letters" means that Zen must be experienced, we have to ask: Experienced how—as Experience 1 or as Experience 2? If Experience 1, then the claim that Zen must be experienced is true but trivial. If Experience 2, then the claim is important but false.

If the claim that Zen must be experienced amounts to the statement that one must learn or come to know Zen firsthand, then hearing about it or reading a description of it written by someone else does not count as experience. In this sense, the idea that Zen is "not founded on words and letters" really amounts to saying that it is "not founded on the words and letters of another." But there is nothing uniquely Zen about this. Vast areas of human life cannot be experienced vicariously but only be learned or known or accomplished firsthand. In fact, Zen teachers often point out parallel examples from everyday life. I recall a lecture in which the Zen master spoke of five things that people have to do by themselves and for which no one can substitute: eat, sleep, urinate, defecate, and attain *satori*. Although the Zen tradition puts great emphasis on the fact that Zen is "not founded on words and letters" and must be experienced, this claim does not require the concept of a "pure experience."

At the same time, there are many who interpret the dictum that Zen is "not founded on words and letters" to mean that "Zen experience" is Experience 2, pure in the sense of being totally without intellectual or conceptual activity. Elsewhere I have argued that the very notion of a "pure experience" is shot through with conceptual problems, and that the reason for its popularity is that it is used ideologically to promote a kind of individualism: in the same way that there is supposed to be a state of nature in which individuals lived in freedom before society arose to compromise it, so also there is supposed to be a pure consciousness before conceptual thinking and social conditioning arose to defile it (HORI 2000).

But even if the notion of "pure experience" were intelligible, the realization of a Zen kōan would not be experience in this sense. Within the experience of the non-duality of subject and object, there is still intellectual cognition. Ordinary perception

presupposes conceptual activity in order to remain clear and intact. One sees the world through concepts like “here,” “there,” “tree,” “table,” “red,” “loud,” “bowl,” “book,” etc. Without these concepts to inform our perception, we would not be able to recognize these flesh-colored things as “hands,” to interpret those lines on the wall as a “door,” to hear that shrilling sound as a “telephone.” All seeing that has meaning is “seeing-as,” seeing according to concepts. Without the investment of conceptual activity in perception, the phenomenal world would become a blur of amorphous patches of color, sounds that we would not recognize as speech, sensations without meaning. Zen awakening does not cause perception to lose its crisp, clear form and dissolve into such shapeless forms and cacophonous sounds. The mind of a Zen master is not booming, buzzing confusion. The fact that the world continues to be clearly perceived and that one’s surroundings can still be described in ordinary language indicates that the experience associated with Zen awakening cannot be a “pure experience.”

The experience of realization in a kōan is indescribable, but only in the very ordinary sense in which *all* immediate experience is basically indescribable. The resistance of the kōan to words is no stronger than the resistance of the aroma of a cup of coffee to verbal expression. The traditional Zen expression of this fact is *reidan jichi* 冷暖自知, “Know for yourself hot and cold.” To know the sensation of hot and cold is one thing; to explain it to one who does not know it is another. The experience of the realization in a kōan is not intrinsically indescribable, but only indescribable relative to the repertoire of experiences of the people conversing. When I speak of the aroma of a cup of coffee and the sensation of hot and cold, other people know what I am talking about because they, too, have smelled coffee and felt the sting of hot and cold. But if I should speak of the taste of the durian fruit, the Southeast Asian fruit with the nauseating smell and the wonderful taste, few Western readers will understand what I am talking about.

If one attempts to describe the realization of a kōan to one who has not had the experience, communication naturally fails, and one reverts to saying that it is “not founded on words and letters.” But just as any two people who share an experience can talk about it, so there can be discussion about the experience of insight into the Zen kōan. (There is, however, a social prohibition against talking about Zen, which may discourage such discussions from actually taking place.)

So it is quite true that Zen can only be known by experience (in a quite ordinary sense of experience), but this does not imply that Zen is some “pure experience” completely devoid of intellectual activity. A corollary to this conclusion is this: there can be meaningful language about Zen but only between people who have shared its experience. Two aspects of meaning are conjoined in meaningful discourse: *reference*, the object, event, or experience that a word or statement denotes; and *sense*, the significance of a linguistic expression. (The classic example of the distinction is that

of “the morning star” and “the evening star,” which have different senses but the same reference, namely the planet Venus.) One who is not a connoisseur of wine does not know what “oakiness” *refers* to in wine tasting and therefore does not understand the *sense* of a statement such as, “This wine is too oaky.” The same could be said of the entire vocabulary of aesthetic and technical appreciation: words like “highlights,” “nose,” “fruitiness” in wine tasting; “lushness” and “restraint” in the sound of the strings in music appreciation; “gracefulness” in hockey; “intelligence” in boxing; and so forth. When one does not know the *reference* of these terms in experience, one cannot understand the *sense* of any statement using them.

Many expressions, “splitting migraine,” “the pain and pleasure of childbirth,” “prolonged melancholia,” “the shame of being old,” refer to special or particular experiences that many people have never had, and perhaps never will. But few will claim that these experiences are some special class of experience “not founded on words and letters.” Because all of us have had some general experiences of “headache,” “pleasure,” “melancholy,” and “shame,” we can understand the general sense of these special expressions without having a particular reference for “splitting migraine” or “pain of childbirth” in our repertoire of experiences. The experience of the Zen unity of self and other, however, is so unusual that it does not fall under any more general class. In this case, without one’s own experience, one has no point of *reference* for the “sound of one hand” or “original face,” and therefore one cannot understand the *sense* of the expressions in which such locutions are used: “Divide the sound of one hand into two”; “How old is the sound of one hand?”; “Make the sound of one hand stand upside down.” That does not mean that the language of Zen is meaningless. It is *senseless* only to those who have not had the experience to which it *refers*.

#### IDEOLOGICAL USE OF EXPERIENCE

Sharf and other scholars have argued that the notion of “religious experience” is an epistemological category created as a useful tool in cultural politics. Sharf writes:

Nishida, Suzuki, Hisamatsu, and their followers, like Schleiermacher, Otto, and James before them, were reacting to the onslaught of Enlightenment values. They sought to reframe our conceptions of the religious such that a core of spiritual and moral values would survive the headlong clash with secular philosophy, science, and technical progress. They were thus led to posit an “essential core” of religion, conceived of as a private, veridical, ineffable experience inaccessible to empirical scientific analysis. (SHARF 1995A, 135)

That is, those who have described the core of religion as the ineffable experience of the numinous, or of the sacred, or of *satori*, implicitly draw a self-serving line

between, on the one hand, those people who have had religious experience (like themselves, practitioners of a religion) and are therefore empowered to be judges of truth and falsehood in matters of religion, and, on the other hand, those people who have not (like the secular and scientific critics of religion) and are therefore incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood in matters of religion. I do not mean to deny that the notion of “religious experience” has been used in the ideological way described here, to anoint certain persons with the authority to speak on religious matters and disenfranchise others. But “religious experience” is not the only fabled beast lurking in the ideological woods. “Empirical scientific analysis,” also known as “academic objectivity,” is another such epistemological concept. Proponents not only claim it exists but also use it to draw a self-serving line between those who have it (like themselves, academic scholars) and who are therefore empowered to be the judge of true and false, and those who do not have it (like practitioners of religion) and are therefore incapable of distinguishing the true and the false. In this conflict over who has authority to speak on matter religious, both sides posit epistemological entities, “religious experience” and “scientific objectivity,” and both sides claim possession of it to grant themselves authority and to disenfranchise the other. In this conflict, it sounds like two hands clapping, but underneath it is really only one.

It is not necessary to get entangled in this debate to make a more important point: simply because a concept has been used in a political or ideological context does not mean that it has no epistemological value. Sharf’s criticism leaves one with the impression that because he has shown that the notion of Zen experience has been used politically, this implies that there is no such thing as genuine Zen experience as traditionally described. What are the grounds for such a stark either/or assumption? There are any number of concepts like gender, color of skin, and religious creed, that have been used as political and ideological tools, but that does not mean that they are empty concepts without real content. Even though the notion of religious experience may be used for ideological purposes, that does not of itself imply that there is no genuine religious experience.

#### INTELLECTUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE KŌAN

As generation upon generation of Zen teachers have stated, it is a mistake to think that one can solve a kōan merely by analyzing it intellectually. Nevertheless Zen has an intellectually comprehensible vocabulary for discussing the many aspects of Zen awakening. Part of this intellectual vocabulary is technical and philosophical, most of it is symbolic and metaphorical. Some of the technical vocabulary is described in a later chapter: the initial awakening, *honbun* (the Fundamental), dynamic action, verbal expression, Five Ranks, the Ten Precepts, the arousing of compassion for all sentient beings, the straight and the crooked, and so on. The vast majority

of the verses and phrases of the capping phrase collections, however, uses symbol and metaphor.

Sometimes the connection between technical vocabulary and symbolic expression is explicitly drawn. For instance, in the headnotes of several verses, the editor of the ZRKS uses the technical term *honbun* 本分, “the Fundamental,” to explain the graphic symbolism of the verses. In the examples below, the words inside parentheses are translations from the headnotes.

從來心似鐵 *Jūrai kokoro tetsu ni nitari.*

Originally his heart resembles iron.

(ZRKS 5.209n: Originally, the sturdy man; the Fundamental.)

黑風吹不入 *Kokufū fuite mo irazu.*

The black wind blows but cannot enter.

(ZRKS 5.313n: A *watō* 話頭 about the Fundamental.)

明珠絕點翳 *Myōju ten'ei o zessu.*

The bright pearl is beyond all cloudiness.

(ZRKS 5.379: This verse uses the bright pearl to illuminate the Fundamental.)

Other metaphorical expressions for the Fundamental have been repeated so often, they are now Zen clichés: “sound of one hand,” “original face,” “Mu,” “the great matter,” “the point of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West,” etc.

But such examples of technical terminology are uncommon. Most often, the Zen phrase books use metaphorical language without explanation, expecting that the reader will have, or will develop, the eye to see through the metaphor to the underlying meaning. Take, for example, the following three phrases referring to the non-duality of subject and object:

賓主一體 *Hinju ittai.* Guest and host are one.

理事不二 *Riji funi.* Principle and fact are not two.

萬物一如 *Banbutsu ichinyo.* The ten thousand things are one.

This sort of explicit labeling using philosophical terminology is said to “stink of Zen.” The Zen tradition rather prefers to use colorful symbolic language.

日落月未上 *Hi ochite tsuki imada noborazu.* The sun has set but the moon has yet to rise.

一家父子 *Ikke no fushi.* Father and son in one house.

一刀一段 *Ittō ichidan.* One sword [cuts into] one piece.

The image in the final line is particularly interesting. The usual expression is *Ittō nidan*, “One sword [cuts into] two pieces,” but here the sword of Zen cuts into a single piece, symbolizing a discrimination that is nondual. The metaphorical language is much more striking than the dry technical language.

Although it is true that one can only grasp a kōan by becoming it, that one cannot grasp a kōan merely through intellectual understanding, nevertheless there is an intellectual language, both technical and symbolic, for talking about the many aspects of Zen awakening. Intellectual understanding of the kōan and the experience of the nonduality of subject and object are not opposed to each other, the one excluding the other. Without realization of the point of the kōan, there can be no intellectual understanding of the kōan. With realization comes understanding.

Capping-phrase collections are expressions of Zen awakening in language. The awakening of Zen can only be realized personally; it is “not founded upon words and letters.” That is the gold of Zen. But to convey that awakening to others, one must use language. To sell the gold of Zen, one must mix it with sand.

# 2

## The Steps of Kōan Practice

IN THIS CHAPTER, we will consider the stages involved in kōan practice as well as some of the technical terminology that accompanies it. The aim is to present a general picture of the overall training career of full-time practitioners engaged in the kōan curriculum.

### KŌAN AND MEDITATION: ENDS OR MEANS?

Although many beginning monks take “passing” the kōan to be the goal of their practice and see meditation as merely the means to that goal, Rinzai teachers caution against this way of thinking. Monks begin and end their daily activities with a period of *zazen* sitting in the *zendō*. From within a period of *zazen*, monks proceed to the main hall to chant sutras. From within *zazen*, they go to meals, to *samu* work, and to begging. After returning from the day’s activities, they return to the *zendō* for another period of *zazen*. When they go to bed at night, they are still in a period of *zazen* that is not ended until the ringing of the bell the next morning. Ritually speaking, therefore, *zazen* is the one fundamental activity of the monastery, the center from which all else is done.

*Zazen* is far from being just the means to passing the kōan. The ritual structure of monastery life makes it clear that it is rather the other way around: one works on a kōan in order to do meditation.

Monasteries vary somewhat in their meditation schedules, but most continue to maintain the traditional schedule of two training terms in summer and winter, each containing three or four major *sesshin* 攝心 (a week of intensive meditation practice), and a number of minor *sesshin* filling out the rest of the year. Three *sesshin* a month is common. In addition, regardless of the *sesshin* schedule and unless there is some special reason, the bell for *sanzen* (meeting with the *rōshi* or Zen master) is put out each morning so that monks may confront the *rōshi* over their kōan at least once a day. In stricter monasteries, monks can expect several hours of meditation and at least two *sanzen* every day throughout most of the year.

## SHOKAN 初關, THE FIRST BARRIER

The initial kōan given to monks, known as *shokan* or “the First Barrier,” is usually either Hakuin’s *Sekishu onjō* (the Sound of One Hand) or Jōshū’s *Mu* (MMK 1). Some temples begin with *Honrai no menmoku* (the Original Face, MMK 23). The Chinese glyph *kan* in *shokan* can also mean “gate,” so that *shokan* could also be translated “First Entry.” I prefer to render it “barrier” to emphasize the difficulty involved in passing through it. Monks are expected to get their first insight, or *kenshō*, into the Fundamental through meditation on one of these kōan. It may take anywhere from half a year to several years to do so. The term *kenshō* needs fuller attention than we will be able to give it here. It contains several layers of meaning in Japanese and, to complicate matters still further, has entered the English language, where Western expectations have given it a new and independent career.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it to remark here that no monk can pass his first kōan without demonstrating *kenshō*. Some academics have surmised that passing a kōan is a form of “scriptural exegesis” presupposing considerable prior study of Buddhist texts. From my own experience as a monk in the Daitoku-ji monastery, I can testify that indeed very few of my fellow monks could be described as intellectuals or as learned in Buddhist teachings. In any case, once past the first barrier, the monk needs further training before he can arrive at and articulate his first insight.

## SASSHO 拶所, CHECKING QUESTIONS

A single kōan usually breaks down into parts, the initial “main case” (*hon-soku* 本則) and numerous “checking questions” (*sassho* 拶所). *Sassho* perform two functions. First, by means of these questions the rōshi can confirm the monk’s original insight into the Fundamental and gauge the depth of that insight. Second, the checking questions push the monk to broaden his insight beyond the Fundamental into particular instances of it. For example, the First Barrier kōan “Sound of One Hand” and “Mu” are typically followed by checking questions such as “What is the Sound of One Hand from in front and from behind?” or “Divide Mu into two.” The number of questions ranges anywhere from twenty to a hundred or more, depending on the teaching lineage of the rōshi.<sup>2</sup> Checking questions serve the rōshi as a quick way to uncover deception. The required initial responses to kōan have become fixed over time, and monks sometimes learn the required responses through hearsay.

<sup>1</sup> See HORI 2000.

<sup>2</sup> AKIZUKI 1987 (259–64) has published a list of the 22 *sassho* for the Mu kōan used by the Myōshin-ji rōshi, Kazan Genku; these have been translated in HORI 2000, 290–1. Jeff Shore reports that in the kōan practice at Tōfuku-ji under Fukushima Keidō Rōshi, there are 102 *sassho* for the Mu kōan and 96 for *Sekishu* (personal communication, 10 June 1998).



To confirm that the insight is actually the monk's own and not something he is repeating at second hand, all the rōshi need do is confront him with a few of these checking questions.

Whichever of the two (Sound of One Hand or Mu), the monk receives initially, the novice monk will most likely receive the other of the pair immediately afterwards, so that his entire first year or more is taken up with these two kōan and their *sassho*.

#### THE INZAN AND TAKUJŪ SCHOOLS

Once past the First Barrier kōan, practice in Rinzai monasteries follows one of two patterns, depending on whether the teaching rōshi belongs to the Inzan school or the Takujū school. Inzan Ien (隱山惟琰, 1751–1814) and Takujū Kosen (卓洲胡僊, 1760–1833) were the direct disciples of Gasan Jitō (峨山慈棹, 1727–1797), who himself was a direct disciple of Hakuin Ekaku (白隱慧鶴, 1686–1769). All monasteries and rōshi presently teaching in Japan associate themselves with one or other of these schools. The two teach basically the same body of kōan and both consider themselves to be transmitting the Zen of Hakuin. But the Inzan school is thought to be sharper and more dynamic in style, while the Takujū school is thought to be more meticulous and low-keyed.

In the Takujū school, Takujū monks work systematically through the *Mumonkan*, beginning with Case 1, advancing to Case 2, Case 3, and so on. On completion of this text, they work on a number of cases from the *Kattō-shū*,<sup>3</sup> and then move on to the *Hekigan-roku*, whose cases they also take up in order, Case 1, Case 2, and so on. In contrast, monks in the Inzan lineage receive kōan from a variety of collections—*Mumonkan*, *Hekigan-roku*, *Kattō-shū*, *Chin'u-shū*—in what appears to be random order. In fact, however, the order is fixed, so much so that a monk transferring from one Inzan school rōshi to another need merely tell the new rōshi his last kōan in order for the new rōshi to know where to continue without leaving any gap or requiring any repetition of work already done.

It is commonly said that, compared to Inzan monks, Takujū monks receive many more *sassho* or checking questions after passing the main case and are asked to provide more *jakugo* (capping phrases). To accommodate the large number of *sassho* and *jakugo* assignments, the *sesshin* schedule in a Takujū monastery often includes more *sanzen* sessions with the rōshi, as many as seven a day. Over the years, the two schools have developed slightly different bodies of Zen verses and phrases from which to draw *jakugo*. The verses and phrases that make up the present volume have been taken from two modern collections, Tsuchiya Etsudō's *Zengoshū* and Shibayama Zenkei's *Zenrin kushū*, in order to encompass the practice of both schools.

<sup>3</sup> Shore, personal communication, 10 June 1998.

The two schools are not so divided as to prohibit the occasional crossover of traditions. A monastery's style of kōan practice will depend on the rōshi teaching there at any given time, and although most monasteries have become associated in the course of generations with a particular school, occasionally a *honzan* headquarters of one of the schools will ask a rōshi from the other to take over one of its monasteries. From time to time, a particularly gifted rōshi will make it a point to train under several teachers, learning the style of both schools in order to be able to give instruction in either of them. In addition, many rōshi seem to know that particular kōan are treated differently in the other school, and this knowledge is passed along in their own teaching of those kōan.

KŌAN TAIKEI 公案體系, THE KŌAN SYSTEM

Both the Inzan and Takujū schools teach the kōan system attributed to Hakuin, although it should be noted that there are some grounds for doubting that he was the creator of the present kōan system.<sup>4</sup> Since we are more concerned with the present use of the system, there is no need to go into these historical questions here.

When people speak of Hakuin's kōan system, they usually are referring to a five-fold division of kōan:

<i>Hosshin</i> 法身	<i>Dharmakāya</i> or Dharma-body
<i>Kikan</i> 機關	Dynamic Action
<i>Gonsen</i> 言詮	Explication of Words
<i>Hachi nantō</i> 八難透	Eight Difficult-to-Pass
<i>Goi jūjūkin</i> 五位十重禁	Five Ranks and the Ten Grave Precepts

This five-fold division seems to have evolved from earlier classification systems. It is known that the Japanese Zen monk Shōichi Kokushi 聖一國師 (Ben'en Enni 辯圓圓爾 1202–1280) had systematized kōan into categories, but there is some disagreement as to whether he used three or four. The Zen monk and scholar Akizuki Ryōmin describes three categories: *Richi* (理致 Attaining the Principle), *Kikan* (機關 Dynamic Action) and *Kōjō* (向上 Directed Upwards) (AKIZUKI 1987, 77). Others add a fourth category: *Kōge* (向下 Directed Downwards) (ITŌ 1970, 36). Nanpō Jōmyō (南浦紹明, 1235–1309), the monk who brought the Yōgi (楊岐) branch of Rinzaï Zen to Japan from China, also divided kōan into three categories: *Richi*, *Kikan*, and *Kōjō* (AKIZUKI 1987, 77–8; ASAHINA 1941, 49–50).

Akizuki notes, however, that in Hakuin's system the original fifth category was not *Goi jūjūkin* (Five Ranks and Ten Grave Precepts) but *Kōjō*. He faults the Zen rōshi Asahina Sōgen for first substituting *Goi jūjūkin* as the fifth category, lamenting the fact that both Zen rōshi and lay writers have blindly followed his lead (AKIZUKI 1987,

<sup>4</sup> MOHR 1999, 315–18.

82). The lack of agreement on precisely what the five categories are has carried over into English-language accounts of Hakuin's system. Miura and Sasaki present Hakuin's system with *Goi jūjūkin* as the fifth category (ZD 62–76), while Shimano gives *Kōjō* (Directed Upwards) as the fifth category and *Goi jūjūkin* as a sixth category (SHIMANO 1988, 79–80). No systematic survey has been conducted to determine what system the majority of Rinzaï teaching-rōshi in Japan now follow, but my general impression is that *Goi jūjūkin*, and not *Kōjō*, is usually considered the fifth category.

A complete list of all the categories of kōan in use would have to include not only *Kōjō* but two others as well. At very advanced stages of kōan practice, a monk might receive:

*Kōjō* (Directed Upwards)

*Matsugo no rōkan* (末後の牢關 Last Barrier)

*Saigo no ikketsu* (最後の一訣 Final Confirmation).

I will discuss each of these in greater detail below. Since descriptions of Hakuin's five stages are readily available in English, I will restrict myself to an abbreviated account of his system here.

### *Hosshin* (Dharmakāya) Kōan

The *Hosshin* kōan reveal the *dharmakāya*, the Dharma-body, or the Fundamental. Asahina Sōgen Rōshi explains:

The simple explanation of Dharma-body, given by the ancients, is that one takes the dharma and makes oneself one with it, but this is just what we mean by true reality (*shinnyo* 眞如), by Dharma-nature, by Buddha-nature, by awakening (*bodai* 菩提), by nirvana, by the original body of the universe. For the Zen practitioner, it means one's own mind nature. In more concrete terms, it is the subject (*shujinkō* 主人公) of our seeing and hearing, of all our consciousness....

The Zen practitioner by illuminating Dharma-body seeks to illuminate himself, to emancipate himself from life-and-death, and to attain unhindered freedom. The *Richi* kōan, the *Kikan* kōan, the *Kōjō* kōan and all other kōan attempt nothing more than to illuminate Dharma-body and radiate freedom through becoming one with the realm of Dharma-body. (ASAHINA 1941, 56)

The Dharma-body kōan are the kōan on which a monk experiences an initial awakening, *kenshō* or *satori*. The First Barrier kōan, the Sound of One Hand, and Jōshū's Mu, fall within this first group. As we see in the formula "If you awaken to *hosshin*, then there is not one single thing" (*Hosshin kakuryō sureba ichi motsu mo nashi* 法身覺了無一物), the realm of *hosshin* is the realm of the undifferentiated and unconditioned. It is useful, at least provisionally, to think of *Hosshin* kōan as those that introduce the undifferentiated and the unconditional. (Like many other Zen

terms, *hosshin* has also a second sense in which the undifferentiated is identical with the differentiated and the unconditioned with the conditioned.)

### *Kikan (Dynamic Action) Kōan*

The *Kikan* or Dynamic Action kōan open up the realm of the differentiated and the dynamic in Zen. The character *ki* 機 in *kikan* is difficult to translate. Originally it denoted a weaver's loom, and in both Chinese and Japanese it is used today in compounds to signify machinery or anything mechanical. In Buddhism it has its own technical meanings, which differ from one branch to the next. Within Zen it has come to be used as a synonym for *hataraki* (working or functioning), and in its wider connotations carries the sense of spirit, dynamism, action, or flair. In general, it implies action rather than stillness and involvement rather than detachment, as, for instance, in the term *zenki* 禪機, which refers to the dynamic activity of the awakened person in the concrete situations of daily life.<sup>5</sup>

Taken together, *Hosshin* kōan and *Kikan* kōan reflect the traditional Chinese contrast between substance (*tai* 體) and function (*yū* 用). The *Hosshin* or “Body of the Buddha” kōan take one to the realm of the ultimate and unconditioned. But it is all too easy to get stuck there, in a condition that Zen calls *deiri no kyūin* 泥裏蚯蚓, “a worm in the mud” (mud being a metaphor for *satori*). *Kikan* kōan pry the monk out of the suffocating *satori* of the undifferentiated and the unconditioned, returning him to the everyday phenomenal world of self and things, of conventionality and discrimination. *Kikan* kōan show that the Fundamental is not merely still and tranquil but also active and dynamic, not only empty and undifferentiated but also full of distinctions and differentiation. To learn this is said to be more difficult than the attainment of the original *satori*, as we see in the following verse.

10.406	涅槃心易明 差別智難入	<i>Nehan no kokoro wa akirameyasuku,</i> <i>Sabetsu no chi wa irigatashi.</i>
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To clarify the mind of nirvana is easy,  
But to enter the wisdom of discrimination is hard.

### *Gonsen (Explication of Words) Kōan*

*Gonsen* kōan bring to light the fact that while the Fundamental is “not founded on words and letters,” it is nevertheless expressed through words and letters. *Gonsen* kōan can be quite long, so that even memorizing them in order to recite them in the presence of the *rōshi* can be a major task in itself. Despite the fact that a special category exists for verbal expression, in my opinion the *Gonsen* kōan do not present any

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the meaning of this term, see *Ki* in Glossary.

problem with words and language that is not common to all kōan. In every kōan, the Zen practitioner faces the problem of breaking through the surface of words and letters—which may appear to be speaking of something else entirely—to the Fundamental beneath. In this sense the problem of how to express in words and letters what is purportedly not founded on words and letters arises in every kōan and is part of the very nature of kōan practice (see HORI 2000 for a fuller discussion).

### *Hachi Nantō (Eight Difficult-to-Pass) Kōan*

Hakuin selected eight particularly dreadful kōan that he said would give the Zen practitioner chest pains and stomachaches. He urged his monks to risk their lives in order to pass these locked barriers and attain Zen awakening (AKIZUKI 1987, 89). These *Hachi nantō* kōan, as they are known, are considered a major test for Zen monks, though there seems to be some disagreement about what these kōan are supposed to teach and what their importance is in the overall kōan curriculum. Miura states that one who has completed the *Nantō* kōan understands “*jiji muge hokkai*, the Dharma world where each thing interpenetrates and harmonizes perfectly with every other thing without any hindrance whatsoever, the realm of complete effortlessness” (ZD 61). This description makes it seem as if the point of the *Nantō* kōan is to attain the fourth Hua-yen *dharma-dhātu*. Akizuki, in contrast, argues that the teachers of antiquity created the *Nantō* kōan to show practitioners that after satori there was also the realm of discrimination and differentiation (which is the function of *Kikan* kōan), and then after that, the work of saving sentient beings (AKIZUKI 1987, 88). I might add that I myself have heard a rōshi remark quite bluntly that the *Nantō* have no significance beyond the fact that Hakuin found them difficult to pass.

Despite this range of opinion about the function of the *Nantō* kōan, most Zen teachers accept a more or less standard explanation, according to which the initial stages of the kōan curriculum are designed to bring the monk to awakening and then to deepen it, while the more advanced stages are meant to cut the monk’s attachment to his own awakening and arouse compassion for others. This latter function is attributed to *Nantō* kōan in the version of the curriculum where the fourth and fifth categories are *Nantō* and *Goi Jūjūkin*, and is attributed to *Kōjō* kōan in the version of the curriculum where the fourth and fifth categories are *Nantō* and *Kōjō*. I cite Asahina Sōgen Rōshi’s account of the *Nantō* kōan:

Once a person feels he has attained some degree of satori, he becomes satisfied with the Dharma joy (法悦) of this new world and thus it is hard for him to make any further advance (*kōjō* 向上). In the history of Zen, there are many who at this stage have sat down in self-satisfaction and stopped here. Such people think themselves fine as they are and therefore have no ability to help other people. Indeed on closer reflection, [we see that] they have not even saved themselves. The *Nantō* are a painful stick to the one who undertakes them. They make one

know what it means to say, “Atop the mountain, another mountain.”... That precious *satori*, which one got by going here, going there, doing this and doing that—[these *Nantō* kōan] take that *satori* and crush it like tree leaves into dust. Zen people call this “the house destroyed and the family scattered.” “Holding onto nothing” has been replaced by “absolutely nothing to lose.” (ASAHINA 1941, 61–2)

The *Nantō* kōan, then, are meant to throw the Zen practitioner back into crisis, releasing another Great Doubt, one that is directed not against the conventional self, but against the self that got created with *satori*.

The cycle of attaining awakening and then cutting it off is described in numerous Zen verses, such as the following:

16.57 凡夫若知即是聖人      *Bompu moshi shiraba, sunawachi kore seijin,*  
聖人若會即是凡夫      *Seijin moshi shiraba, sunawachi kore bompu.*

An ordinary person knows it and becomes a sage;  
A sage understands it and becomes an ordinary person.

14.470 握土成金猶可易      *Tsuchi o nigitte kin to nasu koto wa nao yasukarubeshi,*  
變金爲土却還難      *Kin o henjite tsuchi to nasu koto wa kaette mata katashi.*

To take earth and turn it into gold may be easy,  
But to take gold and turn it into earth, that is difficult indeed.

There is uncertainty now about which eight kōan are included in Hakuin’s list. Miura and Sasaki in *Zen Dust* (ZD 57–61) mention the following five kōan:

Nansen’s Flower (*Hekigan-roku* Case 40)  
A Buffalo Passes the Window (*Mumonkan* Case 38)  
Sōzan’s Memorial Tower (*Kattō-shū* Case 140)  
Suigan’s Eyebrows (*Hekigan-roku* Case 8)  
Enkan’s Rhinoceros Fan (*Hekigan-roku* Case 91)

SHIMANO (1988: 78–9) gives as an example:

The Old Woman Burns the Hut (*Kattō-shū* Case 162).

ASAHINA Sōgen (1941: 62–3) gives as additional examples:

Goso Hōen’s “Hakuun Said ‘Not Yet’” (*Kattō-shū* Case 269)  
Shuzan’s Main Cable (*Kattō-shū* Case 280).

AKIZUKI (1987: 90–1) adds:

Nansen Has Died (*Kattō-shū* Case 282)  
Kenpō’s Three Illnesses (*Kattō-shū* Case 17).

Together these give us ten kōan for Hakuin’s list of Eight Difficult-to-Pass Kōan.

*Goi (Five Ranks)*

The fifth category, *Goi jūjūkin*, contains two subcategories, kōan of the Five Ranks and kōan dealing with the Ten Grave Precepts. The term “Five Ranks” is an abbreviation of “Tōzan’s Five Ranks” 洞山五位. Tōzan Ryōkai 洞山良价 (Tung-shan Liang-chieh, 807–869) was the teacher of Sōzan Honjaku 曹山本寂 (Ts’ao-shan Pen-chi, 840–901). The two were cofounders of the Sōtō School of Zen, the name “Sōtō” representing a combination of the first characters of each of their names. For the Japanese Rinzai school, however, Tōzan’s Five Ranks are presented in a work authored by Hakuin called *Tōjō goi henshō kuketsu* 洞上五位偏正口訣, “The Five Ranks of the Crooked and the Straight: The Oral Teachings of the [Monk] who Lived on Mount Tō.” This work is included in the handbook called *Zudokko* 塗毒鼓 (*The Poison-Painted Drum*), which is one of the standard possessions of practicing monks.

The *Goi* kōan do not introduce the monk to anything new. Rather, they require the monk to systematize all the kōan that he has passed, using the classification system of Tōzan’s Five Ranks. The ranks are:

<i>Shōchūhen</i> 正中偏	The Crooked within the Straight
<i>Henchūshō</i> 偏中正	The Straight within the Crooked
<i>Shōchūrai</i> 正中來	The Coming from within the Straight
<i>Kenchūshi</i> 兼中至	The Arrival at Mutual Integration
<i>Kenchūtō</i> 兼中到	Unity Attained.

In ASAHINA’s explanation (1941, 64), *shō* 正 “is emptiness, is truth, is black, is darkness, is principle, is *yin*,” while *hen* 偏 “is form, is vulgar, is white, is brightness, is fact, is *yang*.” Miura and Sasaki have translated *shō*’i and *hen*’i as “Real” and “Apparent,” but I prefer to render them as “Straight” and “Crooked” in order to avoid the implication that “Real” is more real than “Apparent.” The practicing monk has met the pair *shō*’i and *hen*’i in kōan practice long before he reaches the Five Ranks. In fact, the distinction between the Fundamental and its particular instantiations, as seen in the First Barrier kōan and its particular *sassho* checking questions, is basically the same distinction as that between *shō*’i and *hen*’i. Kōan almost always divide into two or more parts that invariably see the kōan from the two sides of *shō*’i and *hen*’i. Some commentators claim that the philosophical background of Mahayana Buddhist thought stands behind Zen, and indeed this is one of those places in which that background emerges into clear relief in that the distinction between *shō*’i and *hen*’i can easily be taken as the Zen transformation of the Two Truths.

Although the Five Ranks is associated with Tōzan Ryōkai, the idea of five ranks or positions must have grown out of the Chinese theory of Five Elements or Five Forces. The article on Tōzan’s Five Ranks in the *Mochizuki bukkyō daijiten* dictionary of Bud-

dhist terms describes the connections that various commentators have found between the Five Ranks and everything from yin-yang thought to hexagrams of the *I Ching* and Chou Tun-i's diagram of the Supreme Ultimate (MOCHIZUKI 1958, 3864–9). Few useful commentaries on the Five Ranks exist in English. The best starting point is still Chapter Seven of Miura and Sasaki's *Zen Dust*, which contains a slightly abbreviated translation of Hakuin's account of the Five Ranks, *Tōjō goi henshō kuketsu*. One can also consult LUK 1961, POWELL 1986, CHANG 1969, LAI 1983, and TOKIWA 1991.

Of particular interest for many readers will be the relationship between the Five Ranks and the *I Ching*. Since the Five Ranks are constructed from two elements, one positive and one negative (Straight and Crooked, Lord and Vassal, Real and Apparent), it is easy to pair them with hexagrams in the *I Ching*, which themselves are composed of combinations of *yin* and *yang* lines. In fact, Hakuin's own account of the Five Ranks, *Tōjō goi henshō kuketsu*, begins with a diagram of Hexagram 30, Fire upon Fire, but for some reason this diagram has been omitted from the English translation in Miura and Sasaki's *Zen Dust*. Some of the final kōan connected with the Rinzai Five Ranks also treat the hexagrams of the *I Ching*. In working on these kōan, the monk is expected to prepare a set of six woodblocks with *yin* and *yang* faces to be used in the *sanzen* room when he meets the rōshi.

### *Jūjū kinkai (The Ten Grave Precepts)*

*Jūjū kinkai*, the Ten Grave Precepts, are the precepts against taking life, stealing, misusing sex, lying, intoxication, speaking ill of others, praising oneself, covetousness, anger, and reviling the Three Treasures. The Ten Grave Precepts bring Hakuin's kōan system to completion, since the final end of Rinzai kōan practice is not benefit for oneself but benefit for others. Asahina notes that in these kōan the practicing monk must embody the precepts as *Hosshin*, realize their dynamic activity as *Kikan*, express them in words as *Gonsen*, penetrate them completely as *Nantō*, thoroughly understand their theoretic rationale in the *Goi*, and then practice them faithfully in daily life as *Jūjū kinkai*. At the same time, he regrets that these kōan come at the end of a long system of training, since most monks who begin kōan practice leave their training in mid-course without having come to the Ten Grave Precepts (ASAHINA 1941, 70).

In English there are only a few comments on the Ten Grave Precepts kōan, none of which reflect the way they are taught in Japanese Rinzai training. In their chapter on the Ten Grave Precepts, Miura and Sasaki merely list the precepts and cite a passage from monastery *Admonitions* (ZD 73–6). Shimano observes that the point of these kōan is to get past the habit, especially marked in the West, of always seeing things as either good or bad, and to move to the “ultimate standpoint” beyond the dualistic view of killing or not killing. He places strong emphasis on nonduality, on



“no killer and no one to be killed,” on “realization of oneness” (SHIMANO 1988, 80–1). Aitken takes the opposite tack, emphasizing the standpoint of the conventional. His lectures on the Ten Grave Precepts rarely use the language of oneness, replacing it with examples of drunken men in hotel rooms, woman chasers in the sangha, and a cranky mother with a demanding daughter (AITKEN 1984, 3–104). In Rinzai kōan training, both the *shō’i* and *hen’i* (straight and crooked, nondual and dual) aspects of the Ten Grave Precepts are given equal emphasis, and the precepts as a whole are presented not merely as rules to guard human behavior against its tendency to wrongdoing, but also as positive expressions of the bodhisattva’s practice of “the *samādhi* of freedom in the other,” *tajiyū zammai* (他自由三昧). (For normative and nonnormative interpretations of precepts, see also the note at 16.31.)

### *Kōjō (Directed Upwards)*

In the curriculum that seems to be most widely adopted today, the fourth and fifth categories are *Nantō* (Difficult to Pass) and *Goi jūjūkin* (Five Ranks and the Ten Grave Precepts). As we remarked earlier, in what Akizuki claims was the older original kōan system, the fifth category was *Kōjō* (Directed Upwards). Today this category no longer seems to have a well-defined function. In the older curriculum where the fourth and fifth categories were *Nantō* and *Kōjō*, the *Nantō* kōan would simply have been eight kōan considered extremely difficult to pass, and the *Kōjō* kōan would have had the special function of ridding the monk of any “stink of Zen” and of attachment to his awakening.

The variety of different translations of the term *Kōjō* merits comment. I have translated it literally as “Directed Upwards” in view of the fact that Shōichi Kokushi adds the further category *Kōge*, “Directed Downwards.” Shimano translates *Kōjō* as “Crowning,” but I find this misleading in that it implies a kind of finality or completion. AKIZUKI (1987, 91), writing in Japanese, uses the English term “nonattachment” to explain the function of *Kōjō*. MOHR (1999, 317–8) translates it as “Going beyond,” which I find far better in that it implies an open-endedness. *Kōjō* is a reminder that not even the attainment of *satori* or *kenshō* is final, that there is “Atop the mountain, another mountain.” After the task of reaching *satori* comes that of ridding oneself of *satori* and working for the salvation of others. This is *Kōjō*. The saying “When you reach the top of the mountain, you must keep going” seems to imply just this sort of further ascent. But the second mountain one has to climb after arriving at the *samādhi* summit of freedom for oneself (*jijiyū zammai* 自自由三昧) begins with a descent downhill, back into the valley as it were, to cultivate for others the *samādhi* of freedom (*tajiyū zammai* 他自由三昧). The final stage of practice is to leave the mountain to work for the benefit of all sentient beings, and of this stage of practice there is no end.

*Matsugo no rōkan, The Last Barrier; Saigo no ikketsu, The Final Confirmation*

Not much has been written about these last kōan, and needless to say, Zen priests and monks are reluctant to speak of them in public. The Last Barrier kōan is given to the monk as he leaves the monastery. Akizuki gives as examples “Sum up all of the Record of Rinzai in one phrase!” and “Hakuun’s ‘Not yet’” (1987, 96). But since the monk is leaving the monastery, he is not meant to pass this kōan immediately, but rather to carry it constantly with him and to try again and again to see through it right to the bottom. Finally, some rōshi assign a last kōan called *Saigo no ikketsu*. I have not been able to discover much about this kōan but suspect that it is an alternate name for *Matsugo no rōkan*.

SHŌTAI CHŌYŌ 聖胎長養,

LONG NURTURING OF THE SACRED FETUS

The formal kōan training completed in the monastery does nothing more than create a “sacred fetus.” A monk who has completed the kōan training is not yet ready to step out into the world and take on a public role. He must first complete another stage called *Shōtai chōyō* (sometimes pronounced *Seitai chōyō*), the “long nurturing of the sacred fetus.” This period of withdrawal after the completion of the kōan curriculum is also known as *Gogo no shugyō* 悟後の修行 or “post-*satori* training.” (There is some ambiguity in the use of the term, since the same term may also refer to all training after initial *satori*.<sup>6</sup>) As explained in the lectures that rōshi give to their monks, a monk who has completed the kōan curriculum leaves the monastery for several years, hiding his identity as a monk, in order to engage in some activity completely unrelated to monastery practice. The great example is Daitō Kokushi, the “beggar under the bridge.” Zen lore has it that after his *satori*, he lived for twenty years with the beggars under the Gojō Bridge in Kyoto, giving his *satori* time to ripen before he went on to found the Daitoku-ji temple.<sup>7</sup> Daitō Kokushi’s disciple, Kanzan Egen, it is said, withdrew to the mountains of Ibuka in present-day Gifu Prefecture, where for eight years he tended cattle and tilled the fields (ZD 325). In his *Mujintōron* (*Discourse on the Inexhaustible Lamp*), Tōrei Enji cites the long maturation periods of numerous past masters: Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch, went south for fifteen years; Nansen Fugan resided for thirty years in a hermitage (where monks eventually gathered and argued about a cat that Nansen had killed); Daibai Hōjō ate pine needles

<sup>6</sup> See Ruth Fuller SASAKI’s rather general comments in ZD 26.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth KRAFT has examined the evidence for the “beggar under the bridge” image of Daitō Kokushi (1992, 41–7). This book also provides an extremely useful account of the importance of the capping phrase in Zen since Daitō is noted as an early Japanese master of the capping-phrase commentary (130–50).

and wore clothes made from lotus stalks for thirty years (14.47–8); Yōgi Hōe spent twenty years in a dilapidated hut where snowflakes bejewelled the floor in the winter (TŌREI 1989, 451–74). During this period of ripening the monk is said to learn to apply the awakening he attained in formal monastery training to the concrete situations of daily life, and he does this by deliberately extinguishing all self-consciousness of *satori*.

The phrase “long nurturing of the sacred fetus” resonates with profound nuances. The term “sacred fetus” itself looks as if it originated in Taoist practices of longevity and immortality, since the point of Taoist inner alchemy practice is to combine breath, vital force, and spirit to create a sacred fetus which is then nurtured through further discipline into immortality.<sup>8</sup> The practice of withdrawing from society also has clear associations with the broader image of the recluse or hermit in Chinese culture. This individual withdrew from public life not because he was incapable of functioning in the world, but because he found the world too disordered for a person of principle to exercise his talents properly. He chose seclusion in order to nourish himself, all the better to reemerge and assume public responsibility at a later time, when a proper leader had appeared and the time was ripe (VERVOORN 1990). A legendary example of this is Chu-ko Liang in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. This master scholar and strategist of war lived in deep seclusion until Liu Pei, the last scion of the Han Empire, visited him three times and was able to persuade him to come forth and join him in the attempt to reestablish an empire (BREWITT-TAYLOR 1959, 385–407). Reclusion thus symbolizes the fact that, while capable of handling power and rank, the hermit is not attached to these things but puts his self-cultivation and the welfare of people first. Similarly, in *Shōtai chōyō*, the Zen practitioner who has finished his formal training engages in an informal training in which he thoroughly detaches himself from his accomplishments and willingly assumes anonymity for service to others.

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<sup>8</sup> The term “sacred fetus” was used in both Taoist external alchemy and internal alchemy. According to the *Dōkyō jiten (Encyclopedia of Taoism)*, in external alchemy the “womb” was the cauldron into which the various ingredients and chemicals were placed for firing and the silver product that was thereby created was called the sacred fetus. In internal alchemy the process for attaining longevity begins on the winter solstice, when *yin* changes to *yang*. On the one-hundredth day thereafter, the ingredients complete their chemical reaction; on the two-hundredth day in the lower cinnabar field the sacred fetus takes firm shape, and on the three-hundredth day it becomes the “womb immortal” that emits true *ch’i* breath-energy (NOGUCHI et al. 1994, 324).

There are also Buddhist uses. The Buddhist text *Butsu hongyō jikkyō* 佛本行集經 (T 3.655–932) contains the interesting statement, “According to what I have heard, my wife, the Lady Moyo Wang, is pregnant with a sacred fetus whose majesty is so great that if she were to give birth, my wife’s life would be shortened and before long have to come to an end” (quoted in HYDCD 8.669).

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I conclude this short account of the so-called kōan system with a number of supplementary remarks. In day-to-day monastic life, the several categories of kōan make little difference to the practicing monk. Monks themselves do not know to which category the kōan they are presently working on belongs. The categories of kōan are useful to senior monks, who need to reflect on the kōan system as a whole, but monks in the thick of practice seldom speak of *hosshin*, *kikan*, *nantō*, or the like.

Moreover, the formal categories of the kōan system give the impression that every kōan can be assigned to a single category, but in fact *hosshin*, *kikan*, and *gonsen* point to aspects found in all the kōan that every practicing monk easily recognizes even without the formal description. In every kōan the monk must grasp the kōan itself (*hosshin*), experience its dynamic working (*kikan*), and use language to express what is “not founded on words and letters” (*gonsen*). In the same way, the *jakugo* assignments are actually a *gonsen* exercise, even though the word may never be used.

Japanese Rinzai Zen is often criticized, even by its own monks, for allowing the kōan practice to calcify into a rigid formalism. It is not uncommon to hear Rinzai practice faulted for being little more than a ritual recapitulation of kōan responses that the mere passage of time has baptized as orthodoxy. There is some truth to this, but in defense of the practice, I would add that in my own case I never felt anything but admiration for the teachers of the past who had devised a system of training that time and again forced me to plunge deep into *zazen* to find an answer from a place in myself I did not know existed. The fixed response to a kōan resembles the fixed patterns of movements in the martial arts called *kata*. One practices them again and again until they become movements of power, executed precisely and without deliberation. As for whether there are “correct answers” to the kōan, Zen teachers insist that before one engages in the practice a kōan may appear to have a fixed meaning, but that after one has completed the practice, that kōan has no meaning at all, fixed or otherwise.

# 3

## Literary Study in Kōan Practice

KŌAN PRACTICE does not consist merely of meditation and *sanzen*. In the widest sense it also embraces all other aspects of monastery activity, including physical work, ritual and ceremonial practices such as the chanting of sutras, and community life. But even in the more restricted sense of direct engagement with the kōan, it also involves literary study. This study begins in a monk's first year when he is instructed to search for *jakugo* or "capping phrases" for kōan that have been passed, and it continues through to the end of formal training with advanced exercises such as writing lectures, called *kakiwake* (written analysis), and the composition of poetry, called *nenrō* (deft play).

### JAKUGO: THE CAPPING PHRASE

When a monk is first instructed to bring a *jakugo*, he will probably not know what a *jakugo* is and will have to ask his fellow monks what he is being asked to do. The ZGDJT (468) gives a useful definition of the *jakugo*:

*Jakugo* 著語, also *agyō* 下語, *kengo* 揀語. A short commentary appended to a phrase from either the main case or the verse in a Zen text. Though it is clearly a commentary, in it one uses one's eye-for-the-essential either to assess and praise the words or actions of the ancients that support their explanations, or to substitute one's own rendering of their core meaning, freely manipulating the dynamic of life and death. Forms an essential element of certain Zen texts like the *Hekigan-roku* and the *Shōyō-roku*.

As this text makes clear, the *jakugo* assignment reveals both the point or core (*shūshi* 宗旨) of the kōan as well as the eye-for-the-essential (*shūjōgan* 宗乘眼) the monk needs to recognize that core. He is expected to return with a Chinese verse expressing the point of the kōan, or of the *sassho*, as he sees it. Originally, it is said, Zen monks composed their own verses, but with the decline in classical education and facility in composing Chinese verse, modern monks are no longer able to do this. Over time, several thousand such verses have been collected into special Zen collections from which the monk is expected to find an appropriate *jakugo*. The earliest of

these books still in use is the *Zenrin kushū* (*The Zen Phrase Collection*), edited by Ijūshi in 1688. This text is in fact a greatly expanded version of an earlier collection known as the *Kuzōshi*, first compiled toward the end of the fifteenth century by Tōyō Eichō Zenji (1426–1504). New collections of Zen *jakugo* phrases have been compiled during the twentieth century, discarding many of the old phrases and adding new ones. These will be described in more detail in Chapter Five.

Several terms are now used for capping phrases with slightly different meanings. The common term *jakugo* (著語, 着語) is written with characters that mean in Japanese “to append a phrase” (*go o tsukeru* 語を着ける, 語を著ける). The variation in the writing of the glyph for *aku* reflects only the minor nuance between “append” and “attach.” A very commonly used term is *agyō* 下語, which also means “appended phrase.” The term *kengo* mentioned in the definition from the ZGDJT cited above means simply “selected phrase.” Some *jakugo* assignments require a front phrase, a back phrase, and a combined phrase (*zengo* 前語, *gogo* 後語, and *sōgo* 総語). These are meant to express *hen’i*, the Crooked; *shō’i*, the Straight; and the combination of the two. Occasionally *jakugo* and *teigo* 呈語 (“expression”) are used as a pair, *jakugo* signifying the *shō’i* verse and *teigo* the *hen’i* verse. Instead of presenting a traditional *jakugo* to a kōan, a monk may also offer a *betsugo* 別語 (“alternate phrase”) or *daigo* 代語 (“substitute phrase”). All these terms refer to phrases and verses composed in the Chinese language. In addition, there are capping phrases in Japanese known as *sego* 世語, or “vernacular phrases.” Typically these are lines taken from Japanese tanka, haiku, and other traditional forms of Japanese verse. The *Zenrin segoshū* (*Zen Vernacular Phrase Collection*),<sup>1</sup> a collection of Japanese verses suitable for use as capping phrases, has been compiled for this purpose. *Sego* assignments are relatively rare in comparison with *jakugo* assignments. Finally, there are *heigo* 平語, which are “colloquial phrases” taken from ordinary spoken Japanese.

I recall hearing a Zen rōshi explain the relationship of *agyō* to kōan: an *agyō* complements or highlights a kōan the way *wasabi* mustard complements *sashimi* raw fish, a necktie complements a suit, or a flower complements a scroll. The complement is usually one of contrast: *wasabi* is hot and has a strong taste while *sashimi* is very subtly flavored; a necktie is bright while the suit is dark; a flower is colorful while the scroll is black and white. An *agyō* is usually poetic in the form of an artificially contrived metaphor, while the kōan itself is prosaic in its raw and natural form.

The *jakugo* assignment serves several purposes. First, it is an additional type of checking question through which the Zen master can confirm the monk’s insight. But it can also lead to new insight on its own. As the monk pages through the Zen phrase book, he reads each phrase in light of the kōan he has just completed. He may

<sup>1</sup> TSUCHIYA 1957. 773 verses from this collection have been translated in SHIGEMATSU 1988.

happen upon a familiar verse and suddenly see it in a new way. Conversely, a verse in the Zen phrase book may trigger a new insight into the original kōan. When I received the *jakugo* assignment for “Mu,” try as I might, I could not find a capping phrase that summed up “Mu.” Weeks went by. I lost count of the number of times I read through the *Zen Phrase Book* from cover to cover without success. I was beginning to think there *was* no such verse. Finally, in disgust, the rōshi gave me a hint. All at once an avalanche of suitable verses tumbled off the pages, all of which I had read many times before without making the association. It was as if *every* verse expressed “Mu.”

Besides confirming and deepening insight, the *jakugo* assignment functions also as a spur to further practice. As Akizuki explains, when the monk presents a capping-phrase verse he has selected for his kōan and the rōshi accepts it, the rōshi will often discuss some of the other verses that are accepted as *jakugo* for that particular kōan. By seeing the classic *jakugo* for his kōan set side by side with the verse that he has himself selected, the monk realizes the limitations of his own ability to see through the surface of language to the Fundamental beneath, and is impressed with the depth of insight of the ancients (AKIZUKI 1987, 75–6). Occasionally the rōshi will speak with a bit of pride about the verses he himself selected or composed when he was a monk working on that particular kōan.

Investigation of the kōan through the *jakugo* can become rather complicated. A long kōan may be divided into a number of subsections, each of which may require a *jakugo*. Below is an example of an advanced kōan, Rinzai’s Four Discernments (*Rinzai shiryōken*), with its many divisions and *jakugo* assignments. Not every rōshi uses this structure, but it offers a concrete example of one rōshi’s teaching style.

Rinzai’s Four Discernments (*Rinzai shiryōken* 臨濟四料揀 *Rinzai-roku* §10, *Kattō-shū* Case 218):

1. Remove the person, not the surroundings (Standpoint of principle and fact)  
奪人不奪境 (理事の立場)
2. Remove the person, not the surroundings (Standpoint of dynamic action)  
奪人不奪境 (機關の立場)
3. Phrase 語
4. Phrase 語
5. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄
6. Remove the surroundings, not the person (Standpoint of principle and fact)  
奪境不奪人 (理事の立場)
7. Remove the surroundings, not the person (Standpoint of dynamic action)  
奪境不奪人 (機關の立場)
8. Phrase 語
9. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄
10. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄

11. Remove both person and surroundings (Standpoint of principle and fact)  
人境兩俱奪 (理事の立場)
12. Remove both person and surroundings (Standpoint of dynamic action)  
人境兩俱奪 (機關の立場)
13. Phrase 語
14. Phrase 語
15. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄
16. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄
17. Do not remove either person or surroundings (Standpoint of principle and fact) 人境俱不奪 (理事の立場)
18. Do not remove either person or surroundings (Standpoint of dynamic action) 人境俱不奪 (機關の立場)
19. Phrase 語
20. Phrase 語
21. *Nenrō* verse 拈弄
22. Colloquial phrase for “Remove the person, do not remove surroundings.”  
奪人不奪境の平語
23. Same as above 同上
24. Colloquial phrase for “Remove the surroundings, do not remove the person” 奪境不奪人の平語
25. Colloquial phrase for “Remove both person and surroundings”  
人境兩俱奪の平語
26. Colloquial phrase for “Do not remove either person or surroundings”  
人境俱不奪の平語
27. How do you handle the entire Buddhist Canon on the basis of the Four Discernments? 四料揀の立場に一切經典をどうあつかうのか。

Tōzan Goi (洞山五位 Tōzan’s Five Ranks) can be divided into 47 parts with numerous *jakugo*. Even an early kōan like “the Cypress Tree in the Garden” divides into 17 parts. In fact, once one has passed the beginning stages, most kōan divide into at least two parts (*shō-i* and *hen’i*—the Straight and the Crooked), often with accompanying *jakugo* for each part.

The verses in the Zen phrase books are drawn from every area of Chinese literature. Although a major portion comes from the writings of Zen masters or from Buddhist sutras, a considerable part is also taken from the massive fund of Chinese poetry up to and including the T’ang Dynasty. Many verses are also taken from the Chinese histories, the Confucian classics, and Taoist works. There are even one or two Taoist chants and children’s street songs. By constantly paging through the Zen phrase books, the monk is exposed again and again to the great literary phrases of Chinese history, philosophy, and poetry. In addition to learning the original meaning for each of these verses, he also must learn to read them with a Zen eye. For example, he



comes to understand Confucius's statement, "Having heard the Tao in the morning, I can die in the evening" (*Analects* IV, 8) as a kōan. Over time, the experienced monk has memorized so much of the Zen phrase book that it is not necessary for him to spend much time actually reading the text. If assigned a *jakugo*, he may recall an appropriate verse from memory as he sweeps the garden or cuts the carrots.

#### JAKUGO IN THE KŌAN ITSELF

The practice of appending *jakugo* evolved directly from Chinese Ch'an practices that date back at least to the Sung Dynasty. This practice is so important that it has shaped the structure of basic kōan texts such as the *Hekigan-roku* and *Mumonkan*, two of the main kōan collections used in Rinzai kōan practice.<sup>2</sup> In the *Hekigan-roku*, Setchō Jūken (Ch. Hsüeh-tou Ch'ung-hsien, 980–1052) has compiled one hundred kōan cases and added a verse (called a *ju* 頌) to each. This verse is itself a *jakugo*, a capping verse expressing Setchō's insight into the essence of the kōan. In addition to the *jakugo* that Setchō provided for the kōan as a whole, in fifteen cases he also appended *jakugo* to individual lines of the kōan (Cases 4, 18, 23, 31, 33, 36, 42, 48, 55, 61, 74, 82, 84, 85, 91).

The *Hekigan-roku* is a double-layered *jakugo* text, its second editor, Engo Kokugon (Ch. Yüan-wo K'o-ch'in, 1063–1135), having overlaid an additional layer of commentary on Setchō's original. Engo added an introduction to each case, as well as lengthy

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<sup>2</sup> The full title of this kōan collection is *Bukka Engo Zenji kekigan-roku* 佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄 (Ch. *Fo-kuo Yüan-wu Ch'an shih Pi-yen lu*; T no. 2203, 48.139–225). It was first published in 1128 and was soon in wide circulation. Legend says that Engo's disciple Daie Sōkō (大慧宗杲 Ta-hui Tsung-kao, 1089–1163), feeling that the book revealed too much, burned the wooden printing plates for the book. Two centuries later, Chang Ming-yüan 張明遠 reconstituted the text and published a new edition in 1317. Yanagida speculates that Chang was the one who determined the order of the kōan (IRIYA et al. 1981, 301). With one exception, modern editions of the *Hekigan-roku* are based on the Chang edition. The one exception is the "One Night Text" (一夜本), so called because Dōgen Zenji, on the night before his departure from China for Japan, copied the entire *Hekigan-roku* in one night. There are significant differences between this text and the Chang edition. HEINE 1994 offers a study of this text.

The *Hekigan-roku* evolved from an earlier text entitled *Setchō hyakusoku juko* 雪竇百則頌古 (Setchō's Hundred Kōans with Verse Commentary)—Yanagida calls it "the Ur-Text of the *Hekigan-roku*" (IRIYA et al. 1981, 281)—which contains only the Main Case and Setchō's Verse for each kōan. There are no commentaries and no interlinear *jakugo*. Kōan cases 66 to 93 in this text are ordered differently from those in the later *Hekigan-roku*.

The *Zudokko*, which is meant to contain all the basic texts necessary for Rinzai kōan practice, includes the *Setchō hyakusoku juko*. Although the *Zudokko* version is similar in style to the *Hyakusoku juko* (Main Case and Verse but no commentaries or *jakugo*), the order of the cases is the same as that of the *Hekigan-roku*.

prose commentaries to both the Main Case of the kōan and to Setchō's Verse. He then added further line-by-line *jakugo* to both the Main Case and even to Setchō's own *jakugo*. The cases of the *Hekigan-roku* are therefore quite complex in structure, consisting of eight identifiable parts representing three layers of text editing.

Original case	Setchō Jūken Zenji	Engo Kokugon Zenji
		1. <i>Suiji</i> 垂示, an Introduction by Engo (called "Pointer" in CLEARY and CLEARY 1977)
2. <i>Honsoku</i> 本則, the Main Case of the kōan	3. <i>Jakugo</i> 著語, Setchō's interlinear capping phrases to Main Case in 15 cases	4. <i>Agyo</i> 下語, Engo's interlinear capping phrases to both the Main Case and Setchō's capping phrases
		5. <i>Hyōshō</i> 評唱, Engo's commentary to the Main Case
	6. <i>Ju</i> 頌, Setchō's Verse in response to the Main Case	7. <i>Jakugo</i> 著語, Engo's capping phrases to Setchō's Verse
		8. <i>Hyōshō</i> 評唱, Engo's Commentary to Setchō's Verse

Kenneth KRAFT has aptly described the capping phrase as a "cross between a kōan and a footnote" (1992, 5). Although the capping phrase may appear in a text to be a kind of footnote, its function is not to cite a source, supply a gloss to clarify a difficult passage, or provide further details for those who wish it. The opponents in a kōan dialogue are depicted as being in competition; they are always making strategic moves against each other—probing, defending, feinting, attacking. Setchō's interlinear *jakugo* in the *Hekigan-roku* correspond to the cheering and jeering of the bystander to the match. In Case 4, Setchō responds to Isan's unnecessary praise of Tokusan by countering, "He is putting frost on top of snow." In Case 55, he shows himself aghast at the dialogue in the kōan, exclaiming, "Oh Lord! Oh Lord!" At times the bystanders think they can do better than the competitors themselves. For example, in Case 42, Setchō boasts, "When P'ang first asked, I would have made a snowball and hit him"; and in Case 48, the self-appointed expert claims, "At that time I would have just kicked over the tea stove."

Engo's *jakugo*, like Setchō's, resemble the boos and hurrahs of spectators to a game. Since Engo's *jakugo* are themselves responses to Setchō's *jakugo*, Engo is like someone who responds not only to the players but also to the other spectators. Comments that suggest a better move are not merely criticisms of someone else's move in the game; in the game of Zen one-upmanship, they are themselves moves. In the terminology of modern philosophical analysis, a *jakugo* is not merely a descriptive, it is

also a performative. That is, it does not merely describe or characterize an action performed by some other person; it also performs one itself (and that is why they should not be called “Notes” as CLEARY and CLEARY 1977 does).<sup>3</sup>

By way of example, we may look at Case 23 of the *Hekigan-roku*. The text in italics indicates either Setchō’s *jakugo* or Engo’s *jakugo*.

Setchō’s case	Engo’s <i>jakugo</i>
1. Once when Hofuku and Chōkei were wandering in the mountains,	<i>These two guys have fallen into the weeds.</i>
2. Hofuku pointed with his hand, “This right here is Mystic Peak.”	<i>He’s made a pile of bones where there’s level ground. Swear off talking about it. Dig up the earth and bury it deep.</i>
3. Chōkei said, “That may be so but it’s a pity.”	<i>If you lack iron eyes and copper pupils, you will be lost. Two people sick with the same disease are consoling each other. Bury them both in the same hole.</i>
4. Setchō’s <i>jakugo</i> : <i>When you wander in the mountains with these guys, you can’t tell what they will do.</i>	<i>Though he [Setchō] has nicely reduced their net worth, still they’ve got something. On both sides of you, they’ve got their hands on their swords.</i>
5. Another [ <i>jakugo</i> ]: <i>A hundred thousand years from now, I’m not saying there won’t be anyone, just that there will be few.</i>	<i>Pompous salesman! Here’s another holy man up in the clouds!</i>
6. <i>Later this story was related to Kyōshō,</i>	<i>There’s good, there’s bad.</i>
7. <i>Who said, “If it weren’t for Mr. Son [Chōkei], then you would have seen skulls filling the field.”</i>	<i>Only someone on the same path knows. The great earth is so vast, it makes people so utterly sad. When a slave meets a bondsmaid, they are mutually courteous. If Rinzai and Tokusan had appeared, for sure they would have given them a taste of the stick.</i>

The original story of this kōan is quite simple. One day while walking with Chōkei, Hofuku pointed with his hand and said, “This right here is Mystic Peak,” to which Chōkei said, “That may be so but it’s a pity (that you had to say it).” Everything else is *jakugo*. In his *jakugo* at line 4, Setchō, the first editor of the text, expresses his amusement at the clumsy Zen antics of Hofuku and Chōkei each trying to display his enlightenment, but in line 5, he laments that in the future there will be few left with even their level of Zen. Engo Zenji not only reflects Setchō’s condescending superior

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the performative analysis of the kōan, see HORI 2000. Recent discussions of the structure of the kōan in the *Hekigan-roku* may be found in BUSWELL 1987, 344–5, and FOULK 2000, 28–33.

tone, he even trumps Setchō. In his *jakugo* at line 2, Engo decries the clumsiness of Hofuku, whose unnecessary words destroy the very mysticism they describe. He even finds Chōkei is just as bad as Hofuku (“Bury them both in the same hole”). Then in his *jakugo* to Setchō’s *jakugo*, he agrees with Setchō that Hofuku and Chōkei are not completely worthless (line 4), but also lambastes Setchō for his high self-opinion (line 5). Line 7 is open to different interpretations. CLEARY and CLEARY (1977, 154) identify Mr. Son (C. Sun) as Hofuku (C. Pao Fu). But the majority of other commentators identify Son as the informal name for Chōkei (IRIYA et al. 1992, vol. 1, 306; ŌMORI 1994, vol. 1, 187; ASAHINA 1937, vol. 1, 280). Thus taken, the line “If it weren’t for Mr. Son [Chōkei], then you would have seen skulls filling the field” means, if it were not for Chōkei, Hofuku would have got away with his atrocious display of Zen. But Engo’s *jakugo*, “When a slave meets a bondsmaid, they are mutually courteous,” means “It takes one to know one,” implying both parties are mutually Zen clowns. The greater part of this kōan consists of *jakugo*. Though they look like footnotes appended to text, none of them supply the information one expects in a footnote; they are all thrusts and parries in the joust of Zen.

The *Mumonkan*, another important kōan collection used in the Rinzai kōan curriculum, is a less complex text, but it, too, would not have its present structure were it not for the practice of *jakugo*. The *Mumonkan* is a collection of forty-eight cases edited by Mumon Ekai (Ch. Wu-men Hui-k’ai 無門慧開). To each of the forty-eight cases Mumon Ekai appends a commentary and a short four-line verse (*ju* 頌) in which he expresses his Zen insight into the matter of the kōan. The four-line verse is his *jakugo*. Each case of the *Mumonkan* contains some moment of Zen insight, but Mumon’s *jakugo*, in which he expresses his insight into the kōan, can be just as profound as the insight presented in the main case.

For example, in Case 2, “Hyakujō and the Fox,” an old man reveals that long ago he had wrongly claimed that a person of great awakening does not fall into karmic causation, and that his punishment for this mistake was to be reborn for five hundred lives as a fox. The man did not realize it at the time, but his answer, “no falling,” was based on a false dichotomy between falling into karma and not falling into karma. Hyakujō releases the fox from punishment by saying that a person of great awakening is not blind to karmic causation, thus avoiding the dichotomy of falling and not falling. Mumon’s verse on this kōan begins, “Not falling, not being blind, / Two sides of the same die.” Here Mumon goes even further than the main case of the kōan and shows that even Hyakujō’s answer, “not blind,” sets up another false dichotomy between “not falling” and “not being blind.” Mumon’s comment even goes so far as to claim that the fox *enjoyed* his five hundred lives.

KAKIWAKE 書き分け, 書き譯 WRITTEN EXPLANATION  
AND NENRŌ 拈弄 DEFT PLAY

Rinzai kōan practice also includes written assignments. This part of the practice is, however, more difficult to research. In the Myōshin-ji/Daitoku-ji monasteries, monks in their seventh or eighth year who have attained some level of maturity will start receiving written assignments, *kakiwake* and *nenrō*. This is not uniform practice in all Rinzai monasteries. In some lineages there may be no written assignments, or written work may be required only once, after the monk has finished the entire kōan curriculum. Since there is no systematic research on this subject, all one can say is that there is a variety of styles; it is impossible to say that there is one predominant pattern to written assignments.

In those monasteries where written assignments form part of the kōan curriculum, after the monk passes a kōan in the usual way, the rōshi assigns the first few lines of the kōan to the monk as a *kakiwake* assignment. *Kakiwake* literally means “written analysis” 書き分け or “written rationale” 書き譯. The monk researches those few lines identifying names of people and places, explaining difficult characters, tracking down the original sources of any quoted passages or set phrases, explaining any technical terms, and so on, and then finally expounds the Zen meaning of the passage. In style and content his essay will resemble the rōshi’s regular lectures to the monks. The monk writes his essay with a brush on Japanese *hanshi* paper and in ordinary Japanese. He submits the *kakiwake* essay to the rōshi, who then proceeds to mark the essay in much the same way that a university professor corrects a student’s paper. In a few days, the essay is returned to the author with marginal comments in red ink. If the first essay is accepted, the monk is assigned another for the next few lines of the kōan. This procedure continues until the entire kōan has been covered. Even for a short kōan, the entire *kakiwake* essay will comprise several pages, and for a longer kōan, the result will be a small stack of *hanshi*.

On completion of the *kakiwake* essay, which may take several weeks or months, the monk next is directed to write a *nenrō*, a short verse, typically of four lines, in classical Chinese. *Nenrō* literally means “handle playfully,” but I have rendered it here “deft play.” Whereas the *kakiwake* essay is prosaic, detailed, and discursive, the *nenrō* verse is supposed to be free and imaginative, and written in the form of classical Chinese poetry. The monk’s model is the four-line verse that Mumon appends to each kōan in the *Mumonkan*. The *nenrō* verse is much the shorter of the two assignments, but it is also the more difficult.

As is the tradition in Asian scholarship, the *kakiwake* essay is written in an anonymous, impersonal voice. The author does not write in the first person and his personality does not come through in the content. The short *nenrō* verse, in contrast, is meant to be a virtuoso performance in which the monk displays his capacity for see-

ing more deeply into the kōan than any of the previous masters, turning the kōan on its head to reveal some aspect not noticed before. As Akizuki describes the practice, in contrast to the anonymity of voice in the *kakiwake* essay, the monk ritually adopts an attitude bordering on arrogance: “The old masters said such-and-such, but if it had been me, I would have said so-and-so” (AKIZUKI 1987, 76). In both *kakiwake* and *nenrō*, the monk will be expected to make free use of *jakugo* and demonstrate his familiarity with the texts and literature of Zen.

AKIZUKI has published the kōan record for Kazan Genku Rōshi (1837–1917), a rōshi in the Myōshin-ji line (1987, 259–64). He lists two hundred kōan, beginning with Jōshū’s Mu and ending with a group that includes the Five Ranks and Ten Grave Precepts. Each main case of a kōan is also followed by *sassho* checking questions, *jakugo* and *sego* capping-phrase assignments, and *kakiwake* and *nenrō* written assignments, for a total of 525 assignments. Here is an example kōan (no. 174): “Tokusan Carries His Bowls” (MMK 13), which displays how the different kōan assignments fit together.

#### Kōan 174

**Main Case:** Seppō, disciple of Tokusan, was the rice server. One day, the noon meal was late. Tokusan came down to the eating hall carrying his bowls. Seppō said, “The bell has not yet rung and the drum has not yet sounded. Old Master, where are you going carrying your bowls?” Tokusan without a word bowed and returned to his quarters. Seppō told this to Gantō. Gantō said, “Eminent is Tokusan, but he has still not understood the final word.” Tokusan heard about this and sent his attendant to call Gantō to his quarters. He asked Gantō, “Do you not approve of me?” In a whisper, Gantō spoke his mind. The next day, when Tokusan took the lectern, he was very different from usual. In front of the monk’s hall, Gantō clapped his hands and laughed, “How joyful it is that the Old Master has understood the final word. From now on, no one in the world can make light of him. But even so, he will live for only three years.” Sure enough, in three years he passed away.

**Assignment 457:** First, in words, what is the point of “Tokusan without a word bowed and returned to his quarters”?

458: What is “The final word”?

459: *Jakugo*.

460: What is “He spoke his mind in a whisper”?

461: *Jakugo*.

462: What do you say to, “But even so, he will live for only three years”?

463: *Jakugo*.

464: Checking question: How about if he did not die in three years?

465: *Kakiwake* for the entire kōan “Tokusan Carries His Bowls.”

In this example of an advanced kōan, one has the sense that the story of Tokusan and his two disciples contains a mysterious insight that requires a clear Zen eye to see. As is the standard pattern with every kōan, the monk sits in meditation on the kōan in the usual way until he has had some insight into its matter, and then demonstrates that insight in front of the rōshi. Without such insight into the point of that kōan, there is no point in proceeding to the literary work. After passing the Main Case, the monk receives several *sassho* checking questions (numbers 458, 460, 462, 464 are all checking questions even though the term *sassho* is actually used only once in 464) interspersed with capping-phrase assignments (*jakugo*). Finally, he writes up the entire kōan as a *kakiwake*.

Completing the entire curriculum of kōan will take about fifteen years, although again there are great individual differences, depending, among other things, on the teaching style of the master and the ability of the monk. Because the monk advanced enough in kōan practice to be working on *kakiwake* and *nenrō* will be a senior monk, it is likely he will not be living in the communal *zendō* but will have a separate room, perhaps by himself, perhaps shared with another monk. Most of the monks in the communal *zendō* are junior monks, the majority of whom plan to leave the monastery after two or three years to become the resident priest of a branch temple somewhere. The younger monks must obey the rule of “No reading and no writing.” (Indeed, during my time at Daitoku-ji, a monk was scolded if caught with a pen in his hand.) And in the practice of the kōan, novice monks are often told that the kōan cannot be solved intellectually, that intellectual study will only confuse them in their attempt to penetrate the kōan. For the entire latter half of this 15-year period, the senior monk will continue to work on new kōan each day, maintaining the same *sanzen* schedule as everyone else. While the junior monks are sitting in meditation cultivating the insight not founded on words and letters, the senior monk is constantly studying, writing, and submitting *kakiwake* and *nenrō*.

# 4

## The Kōan and the Chinese Literary Game

AMONG BUDDHIST MEDITATION practices, meditation on the Zen kōan is surely one of the more unusual forms. Why did Buddhist meditation practice in Ch’an/Zen take the form of kōan training? And where did the kōan come from? Are there more primitive forms out of which the kōan evolved? This chapter conducts a short investigation into these questions to establish, first, that kōan training has many features in common with other Chinese practices, which on the one hand help explain why kōan language is so baffling, yet on the other hand show more clearly how an experience said to be “not founded on words and letters” can be so intimately tied to literary practices. Second, this chapter tries to make a contribution to the still unanswered question as to the origin of the kōan. Although there is speculation that the kōan may have evolved from the “pure conversation” tradition of the philosophical Taoists, and although there are strong similarities between the kōan dialogue and the dialogues in *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World* 世說新語 (MATHER 1976), there is to my knowledge no substantial scholarship explaining the origin of the kōan. This chapter advances the hypothesis that one of the parents of the kōan is the Chinese literary game, that the kōan is the child of a mixed marriage between the Chinese literary game and Buddhist teaching and training practices. Judith BERLING (1987) has argued that the emergence of the Ch’an/Zen Recorded Sayings genre must be understood against the previous history of Buddhist sutra literature, which it both continues and undermines. In this essay, I am advancing a parallel argument that the kōan practice also both continues and undermines a prior culture of secular literary and poetic practices. The result is a training practice with many features similar to literary games (competition, on-the-spot spontaneity, turning the tables, and, especially, mind-to-mind transmission) but in the service of a non-literary insight, an awakening “not founded on words and letters.”

### COMMENTARIAL PRACTICES

Although the Zen kōan is a unique teaching technique, as a literary genre it still has “family resemblances” to several other institutions and practices in early Chinese culture. First of all, it has a family resemblance to the traditional Chinese



commentarial practice in which scholars appended commentaries to a classical text, sometimes in the form of verse, sometimes in the form of prose essays, sometimes in the form of line-by-line annotations. As we have already seen, in the *Hekigan-roku* and the *Mumonkan* the compiler has appended a verse to each kōan in the collection. In the Chinese tradition, since structured and rhymed verse was the vehicle of much writing both formal and informal, writers often responded to an original text in verse, especially if the original text was itself composed in verse. A writer was considered skillful to the extent that he could use the rhyming scheme and imagery of the original verse but make these express his own ideas.

Commentaries on philological and philosophical matters took the form of prose essays appended to the text. In China (as in other cultural traditions), these essays tended to get longer and longer, to the point where eventually entire volumes were written to explicate a title or single sentence. With the passage of time, commentaries that originally served merely as an aid to glossing a text ballooned into entire encyclopedias whose categories of knowledge were pegged to the words of the canonical text they were meant to illuminate (HENDERSON 1991, 77–81). In the *Hekigan-roku*, Engo Zenji appends two commentarial essays to each kōan, one for the main case of the kōan and one for Setchō’s verse. Although he does not engage in philosophical or text exegesis, his long, discursive prose essays are very much in this style of traditional commentary.

Unlike religious traditions that tried to maintain a distinction between the “sacred text” and the commentary literature written by ordinary humans, in the Chinese commentarial tradition, the stature of the commentary often grew in time to that of the original canonical text, thus blurring the line between canon and commentary. Chu Hsi’s commentaries on the Confucian texts, for instance, came to be revered and studied as seriously as the original Confucian texts they were meant to explicate. So, too, in the *Hekigan-roku* the *jakugo* that Setchō Zenji and Engo Zenji append to an original kōan are, in turn, often taken up as kōan themselves, effectively erasing the distinction between kōan and capping phrase, between main text and commentary. Engo Zenji’s line-by-line comments on Setchō’s line-by-line comments, as we have seen in the previous chapter, form a kind of sub-*jakugo* to the main *jakugo*. In this way, the different features of each case of *Hekigan-roku*—the *ju* verse, the *hyōshō* commentaries (as well as the *suiji* introduction that Engo Zenji has also added), and the *jakugo* appended to *jakugo*—clearly display how deeply the literary genre of the kōan imitates traditional Chinese literary practices.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> HENDERSON 1991, 51, 56. A further interesting feature of the Chinese commentarial tradition is that the commentator sometimes creates the canon upon which he claims to comment. Before Chu Hsi established the Confucian *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and the *Great Learning* as the “Four Books,” they had no identity as a unit; in fact, the latter two were not even

It should also be said that at the same time, the use of the *jakugo* in texts like the *Hekigan-roku* represents a departure from traditional commentarial practices. The *jakugo* is a new type of commentary, short and terse, often vulgar, irreverent, and unlearned. It abandons the third-person stance of a detached commentator and assumes the first-person stance of an involved participant in the *kōan*. The commentator, as we have seen, is a contentious bystander who sometimes actually steps into the game, claiming as much insight as the original players in a game, offering unsolicited instant analysis, and lamenting the obvious clumsiness of the players.

#### THE KŌAN AND THE CHINESE LITERARY GAME

Authors who discuss the Zen *kōan* often start by explaining that the Chinese characters for *kōan* literally mean “public case” and that, just as a magistrate’s decision expresses the position of the law on a particular case, so also the *kōan* expresses the Buddha law on a matter, thus putting an end to all private opinion about it. FOULK (2000), for example, has recently argued that the term *kung-an* (*kōan*) originally referred to a case on a magistrate’s desk and that *kōan* literature is basically constructed on the metaphor of a magistrate sitting in judgement. I believe, however, that the paradigm of the magistrate sitting in judgement applies more aptly to *kōan* commentary, but not to original *kōan* cases themselves. Commentary is a one-sided judgement in which the party being judged does not get a chance to answer back. In the *kōan* itself (but not in the *kōan* commentary), the parties to a dialogue are often depicted in mutual thrust and parry with each other. In addition, despite its popularity, the legal metaphor does not explain the more important features that are essential to the *kōan*—the perplexing language, the sense of fun, the criterion for a good win (“turning the spear around”), insight, and mind-to-mind transmission. I believe another paradigm helps explain all these latter features of the *kōan*: the Chinese literary game.

In Chinese culture long before the rise of Ch’an/Zen in the T’ang and Sung periods, there was a very old and widespread custom of literary games, chief of which was the game of “capping phrases” or “capping verses,” 語次, 連句, 聯句. In a simple version of this game, one person gives the first line of a well-known couplet and challenges the other to recall the second line. The game presupposes that the players have memorized a sizable common stock of Chinese poetry. In other versions of capping-verse games, one person composes an original verse and challenges the other to compose a matching verse with parallel structure, imagery, rhythm, etc. to form a couplet. Alternatively, the two players may compose complete couplets matching each other.

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considered independent texts. By identifying them as a unit and writing commentary on them as a unit, he and his fellow scholars effectively canonized them (p. 51).

Or again, four people can compose a quatrain, each person composing one of the lines with an eye to producing an integrated four-line poem. Numerous other variations resulted as players invented rules of their own.

The verses would use the highly allusive language of Chinese poetry, in which one spoke of something without ever mentioning it directly. Part of the fun of capping-phrase games was to speak in such allusive language that the other person missed the connotation. And part of the skill of a good player was the ability to recognize the hidden meaning of the other person's allusions and by "turning the spear around" thrust back using a similar allusion with some other hidden meaning. These general features of the capping-verse game—the use of highly allusive language in which people communicated something without directly saying it (a kind of "mind-to-mind transmission"); two players jousting with each other; the fact that either player could win; the elements of fun, deception, and insight; the fact that the best win "turns the spear around"—are also all features of the Zen kōan dialogue. In fact, the resemblance is so strong that I believe the kōan itself is structured on the paradigm of the capping-verse game. In other words, a Zen kōan is a kind of Chinese capping-verse game, where the two players test and apply, not (merely) their training in poetry, but also the clarity of their awakened eye. The Zen kōan thus derives from two sources. One is the wordless insight of Zen, the insight "not founded on words and letters." The other source for the kōan is the Chinese literary game. To speak about the insight that language could not describe, Chinese Zen monks in the T'ang and Sung periods adapted the capping-phrase game in which for centuries literati had engaged in a highly sophisticated give-and-take of speaking about something without naming it directly. Thus the much later Japanese monastic practice wherein Rinzai Zen monks append a capping phrase to a kōan signifies not a degeneration of the Zen kōan tradition but a return to its origins.

#### ALLUSION IN CHINESE LITERATURE

The Zen kōan shares with Chinese poetry the rich abundance of literary allusion. As LATTIMORE has pointed out, all allusion has the character of an inside joke, puzzling to those who are not aware of the hidden reference (1973, 405). Moreover, the concealment is done, as the etymology of the word suggests, with a ludic attitude, in a spirit of play. A good allusion masks but also reveals its object of reference in a clever way, such that the dawning revelation brings pleasure to the reader or listener of the verse.

Allusion packs a poem with meaning. In Chinese literature, the mere mention of the name of an ancient virtuous emperor like Yao 堯 or Shun 舜, of a tragic beauty like Yang Kuei-fei 楊貴妃, or of a valiant warrior like General Li Kuang 李廣 將軍 was enough to evoke a wealth of images from the countless stories, legends, and poems

that surrounded such figures. Even ordinary words were rich in connotations and could be invested with special meanings. Bamboo, for instance, connoted uprightness and integrity; the pine tree, endurance and fortitude; the plum tree, freshness, youth, and feminine beauty. “Not enough ground even to stick in a pick” 無立錐地 was a standard expression for poverty. The “nomad’s flute” 羌笛/胡笳 always conveyed a sense of sadness, and the “cry of the monkey” 猿叫/猿啼 a sense of unbearable loneliness. “Clouds and rain” 雲雨 was a way of referring to amorous intercourse and a “pair of ducks” implied conjugal happiness. “Flowing sands” 流砂 referred to the desolate desert frontier. And so on. Very ordinary words could also carry associations of a more profound sort. The term “three persons,” for example, recalled to the mind of the literate reader the famous saying of Confucius, “Where three persons go, for certain there will be a teacher for me” (*Analects* VII, 21). In addition, the range of meanings for a term reached beyond its original context to include its use in allusion by later poets. We might say that the time-honored custom of allusion in Chinese poetry worked like compound interest, meanings multiplying on top of meanings, all becoming part of a large cloud of associations that clung to these terms. The Zen *jakugo*, coming from every branch of Chinese literature as they do, draw upon this immense reservoir of lore and language, of symbol and imagery.

Literary allusion comes naturally to the Zen tradition. The early Ch’an and Zen monks had their own vocabulary of indirect expressions for referring to, without naming, the fundamental experience of the nonduality of subject and object: “sound of one hand,” “original face,” “Mu,” and “the First Patriarch’s coming from the West,” to mention only the most widely known. To express different aspects of the experience of realization, these masters also took over and adapted the wider stock of allusions, set phrases, and images common among poets in the T’ang and Sung periods. For example:

8.59 伐柯伐柯 其則不遠 *Ka o kiri ka o kiru, sono nori tōkarazu.*

To hew an axe handle, to hew an axe handle.

The model is not far away.

The image of the axe handle used to carve another axe handle in this verse, originally from the early *Book of Songs*, received numerous interpretations throughout its long history and continues to do so today. In its original context, it symbolized a married woman in her role as matchmaker—one married woman creating another. It later came to symbolize ritual, in the sense that the Confucian ruler used ritual to govern by ritual (SAUSSY 1993, 120–1). It could also symbolize poetic language used to describe the language of poetry (LIU 1988, 41). The image eventually found its way into Zen phrase books. Similar to other Buddhist phrases such as “Ride an ox in search of an ox,” it was taken to mean using Buddha-nature to realize Buddha-nature (or alternatively, using attachments to cut off attachments: “A nail pulls out a nail, a

stake takes out a stake” (6.186). Even today, the Zen-inspired poetry of Gary SNYDER continues to extend the many uses of the metaphor of the axe handle (1983).

Standard Chinese poetic images such as “pure wind” and “bright moon” take on another meaning in Zen. One could say baldly, “Form is emptiness and emptiness is form” but it is far more elegant to say:

10.279 清風拂明月 *Seifū meigetsu o harai,*  
明月拂清風 *Meigetsu seifū o harau.*

The pure wind skims the bright moon,  
The bright moon skims the pure wind.

Philosophically, one might say that in emptiness all duality is overcome, and in form all duality is resurrected. But one could also say more poetically:

10.252 春色無高下 *Shunshoku ni kōge naku,*  
花枝自短長 *Kashi onozukara tanchō.*

In spring colors, there is neither high nor low,  
The flowering branches are, by nature, some long, some short.

A “wooden man” is a puppet and a “stone woman” is a barren woman incapable of bearing children. But in Zen, these negative connotations are set aside and the terms are given a positive connotation. In heavy, more technical language one can say that in the no-self of Zen, the vicissitudes of everyday life are lived through effortlessly. In more literary form, we have:

14.26 木人夜半穿靴去 *Bokujin yahan ni kutsu o ugachisari,*  
石女天明戴帽歸 *Sekijo tenmei ni bō o itadaite kaeru.*

Putting on his shoes, the wooden man went away at midnight,  
Wearing her bonnet, the stone woman returned at dawn.

One could multiply such examples indefinitely.

Allusion serves political and social functions as well. Because poetry was a medium of official discourse in traditional China, skill in poetic composition and allusion was put to use in a variety of political contexts for a variety of political purposes, some of them honorable, some not. Arthur Waley has pointed out that in the *Tso chuan* 佐傳 chronicles, all officials were expected to know the *Book of Songs* 詩經 in detail, thus providing themselves with a tool of many uses. For example, the Songs were sung as “diplomatic feelers” expressing yet veiling an official’s intentions. Similarly, an official might recite one of the Songs as a technique for political persuasion, where a modern politician would offer reason and argument. In one instance mentioned by Waley, an envoy failed to recognize an allusion to the *Songs* and his mission was immediately discredited. Officials also quoted the *Songs* to give their positions moral

authority. By skillful allusion to figures mentioned in the *Songs*, an official could admonish his superior without naming him directly and incurring his punishment (WALEY 1937A, 335–7).

In addition to such obviously political uses, allusion had social functions. It drew a line between those with inside knowledge and those without. The skillful poet could display his great knowledge of literature and, at the same time, conceal his true intentions to those who knew only the literal, surface meaning of his words. If the allusions in a verse were lost on the listener, he could not know, for example, if he was being subtly ridiculed. If the listener did understand, then he could congratulate himself on his own erudition. What is more, in a social setting where traditional texts were held in reverence, reference to those texts had the force of an appeal to authority. In alluding to a text, the individual in effect implies that he was not simply voicing his own individual opinion but reiterating the wisdom of the ancients. At the same time, the “corporate legitimacy” of the group itself was reinforced by appealing to the great textual authorities of ages past (LATTIMORE 1973, 411).

These elements are all clearly at work in Zen texts. One scores a point if one can speak of awakening in allusions the other does not catch. And the entire ritual not only recreates an ancient past tradition but also confers legitimacy on those in the present who claim to be its descendants. Kōan after kōan depicts one Zen monk testing the clarity of another’s insight through the skillful use of allusion. The monks fiercely compete with one another not in the language of philosophical discourse but in poetic references to “coming from the West,” “three pounds of flax,” “wash your bowl,” and “the cypress tree in the front garden.” Mastery of the allusive language of Zen is taken as one of its marks of authority.

#### ANALOGY IN CHINESE LITERATURE

If the structure of analogy may be taken to be “A1 is to A2 as B1 is to B2,” then Chinese thought and literature are full of analogy. The reader of Zen kōan will quickly suspect that analogy is present, but if the principle of resemblance linking the As to the Bs is not revealed, the kōan will remain a mystery. This sense of a hidden truth lurking beneath the surface of the text is not unique to the kōan but runs throughout all of Chinese thought and literature.

The Chinese division of all phenomena into *yin* or *yang*, for example, relies on analogy. As dark is to light, so is night to day, winter to summer, north to south, inside to outside; as female is to male, so is softness to hardness, moisture to dryness, water to earth, moon to sun. Analogical thinking in the Chinese tradition goes beyond resemblances to imply causality as well. For example, why is it that the rivers overflow their banks and flood the earth?—because the emperor dallies too much with his concubines. In both cases, the *yin* element (the waters of the river and the

concubines) overpower the *yang* element (the earth and the Emperor). To stop the flooding, the emperor must dismiss some of his concubines. In this case, analogy points to more than surface resemblance; it serves both as metaphor and as causal explanation.<sup>2</sup>

The analogy between flooding and the Emperor's behavior becomes immediately understandable once one sees that *yin-yang* thought classifies them as the same. But without the underlying principle of resemblance, the connection remains shrouded in mystery. One reads much other Chinese literature with a similar feeling of mystery. Consider this passage from the Confucian *Analects*:

Yen Yu said, "Is the Master on the side of the Lord of Wei?"

Tzu-kung said, "Well, I shall put the question to him."

He went in and said, "What sort of men were Po Yi and Shu Ch'i?"

"They were excellent men of old."

"Did they have any regrets?"

"They sought to practice benevolence and could. Why should they regret?"

On coming out, he said, "The Master is not on his side." (*Analects* VII, 14)

The passage comprises the entire entry for *Analects* VII, 14. It is not a *kōan*, but as in the *kōan*, apparently irrelevant items are connected together, leaving the modern reader puzzled. As Nitta Daisaku has pointed out, this passage shares an important feature with the *kōan*: it "indicates a particular with a particular" (*ji o motte ji o shimesu* 事を以て事を示す), that is, "pointing to the meaning of one particular thing, not by a reason, but by another particular thing" (NITTA 1967, 95). One particular is explained not by means of a general principle of which it is an instance, but by reference to another particular, which is also an example of the same unspoken general principle.<sup>3</sup>

This case is further complicated by the fact that the underlying analogy needs to be explained through an allusion. What lies behind Yen Yu's question to Tzu-kung, "Is the Master on the side of the Lord of Wei?" Yen Yu and Tzu-kung were disciples

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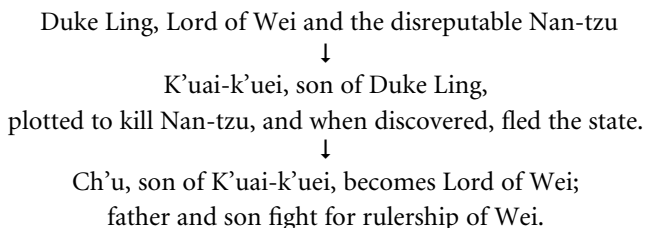
<sup>2</sup> NEEDHAM AND WANG originally opened discussion on this topic (1956). For later discussions of correlative thinking, see GRAHAM 1986, 1992, and HENDERSON 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Nitta's interesting discussion goes on to claim that answering a particular with a particular reflects Confucius's emphasis on ritual, which gave priority to actual performance of concrete actions and less to philosophical explanations. Confucius was capable of acting much like a Zen master, as we see in the following passage:

Someone asked for an explanation of the Ancestral Sacrifice. The Master said, I do not know. Anyone who knew the explanation could deal with all things under Heaven as easily as I lay this here; and he laid his finger upon the palm of his hand. (*Analects* III, 11, after WALEY 1938)

The claim to ignorance, the equating of dealing with all under Heaven with moving a finger, and the enigmatic action are all elements to be found in the Zen *kōan*.

of Confucius and at the time of this particular conversation were staying as guests of the Lord of Wei, Ch'u, son of K'uai-k'uei. The previous Lord of Wei was not Ch'u's father K'uai-k'uei, but his grandfather, Duke Ling. What had happened to the father K'uai-k'uei? Rumor had it that years earlier, Duke Ling's wife, the disreputable Nan-tzu (mentioned at *Analects* VI, 26), carried on an incestuous relationship with her half brother, the handsome Prince Chao (mentioned at VI, 14). K'uai-k'uei, Duke Ling's son (Ch'u's father) was ridiculed because of the Duke's connection with Nan-tzu, and in response K'uai-k'uei plotted to kill her. Before he could accomplish the deed, the plot was discovered and he was forced to flee the state, leaving behind both his own son Ch'u and any chance at succession. When old Duke Ling died, since the son K'uai-k'uei was in exile and no longer heir apparent, K'uai-k'uei's son, Ch'u, succeeded as the next Lord of Wei. This set the stage for a protracted struggle for the state of Wei between father and son, K'uai-k'uei and Ch'u.<sup>4</sup> The three generations are as follows:



While Ch'u, then Lord of Wei, was fending off his father's attempts to take control of the state, Confucius came to stay as a guest of the state. When Yen Yu asked, "Is the Master on the side of the Lord of Wei?" he was asking if Confucius sided with Ch'u against his father. In Wei, where generations of the ruling family had engaged in unfilial, disloyal, and incestuous behavior violating the most fundamental precepts of Confucius's teaching, naturally the disciples wanted to know which side the Master supported.

We have further to ask what allusion lies behind Tzu-kung's question, "What sort of men were Po Yi and Shu Ch'i?" Proper etiquette dictated that Tzu-kung not put Yen Yu's question directly to Confucius. Therefore Tzu-kung posed his question indirectly in the form, "What sort of men were Po Yi and Shu Ch'i?" Po Yi and Shu Ch'i were legendary brothers, exemplars of filial piety and loyalty. Two well-known stories illustrate their virtues.

In the first, their father, feeling the younger son, Shu Ch'i, to be the more worthy, designated him as heir and successor rather than his older son, Po Yi. Shu Ch'i, out of respect for his older brother, insisted that Po Yi succeed their father. But older brother

<sup>4</sup> The entire story is recounted in the *Tso chuan* (WATSON 1989, 195–200).



Po Yi, like a true filial son, would not disobey the wishes of his father, and refused the throne. In the end, neither took the succession and both fled to another state.

In the second story, King Wu had rebelled against the Yin Dynasty's last evil king. Although King Wu is always depicted in later Chinese history as a virtuous king who deposed a wicked ruler, his rebellion against the throne at the time was an act of disloyalty. Po Yi and Shu Ch'i protested to King Wu but were ignored. As their unbending moral principles prevented them from acquiescing to King Wu, they hid themselves on Mount Shou-yang. Too virtuous to eat the grain of the new dynasty, they fed themselves on a diet of ferns until they eventually died of starvation.<sup>5</sup>

In *Analects* VII, 14, therefore, the family of the Lord of Wei exemplifies those who put personal greed and ambition before filial piety, loyalty, and correct behavior. At the same time, Po Yi and Shu Ch'i are exemplars of those who place filial piety and loyalty before personal gain. Tzu-kung could have asked "What is your moral stance with regard to the family of the Lord of Wei?" but ritual politeness obliged him to ask indirectly, "What sort of men were Po Yi and Shu Ch'i?" Confucius, of course, recognized at once the unstated point of the question. In response to Tzu-kung's inquiry, "Did they have any regrets over their course of action?" he replied, "They sought to practice benevolence and were able to. Why should they have any regrets?" From this reply, Tzu-kung knew at once Confucius's attitude to the Lord of Wei. Since Confucius approved of Po Yi and Shu Ch'i's unbending moral determination, Tzu-kung could report confidently to Yen Yu, "The Master does not support the Lord of Wei."

This form of dialogue, as we say, is shared by the Zen kōan. Where we would expect a statement of general principle (Ch. *li*; J. *ri* 理) such as, "One ought to put filial piety and loyalty before personal advantage" to explain Confucius's attitude, instead *Analects* VII, 14 explains one particular (Ch. *shih*; J. *ji* 事)—Confucius's attitude to the Lord of Wei—by analogy with another particular—his attitude to Po Yi and Shu Ch'i. In so doing, no explicit mention is made of any general principle linking those particulars. Those trained in Chinese literature and history will be able to identify the allusions and fill in on their own the background information needed to construct the analogy, which would then serve the purpose of an explanatory general principle connecting the two particulars. But those without the requisite learning will find mysterious the linking of a particular with a particular without any intermediary.<sup>6</sup>

Allusion refers to a thing without naming it directly. Analogy relates two particu-

<sup>5</sup> Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *Shih-chi* 史記伯夷列傳.

<sup>6</sup> The linking of particular to particular again can be seen as part of a larger pattern of correlative thinking. When particular and particular are not only correlated but also causally linked, the relationship was called "resonance" *kan-ying* 感應. *Kan-ying* is a hybrid, midway between a metaphor and a cause. For more on "resonance" and on Chinese correlative thought in general, consult HENDERSON 1984.

lars without revealing the general principle connecting them.<sup>7</sup> These general features of Chinese literature are at work in the Zen kōan, making it an incomprehensible cipher to those not steeped in the literary world of Chinese symbol and metaphor, history and legend. But it would be a mistake to think that the incomprehensibility of a kōan is due merely to an inability to decode the allusions and analogies imbedded in its language. Consider the following three classic Zen dialogues:

A monk asked Ummon, “What is Buddha?” Ummon replied, “A lump of dried shit.” (MMK 21)

A monk asked Tōzan, “What is Buddha?” Tōzan said, “Three pounds of flax.” (MMK 18)

A monk asked Jōshū, “What is the point of the First Patriarch’s coming from the West?” Jōshū said, “The cypress tree in the courtyard.” (MMK 37).

In each case we expect a statement of a general principle, but instead we are given a concrete particular. One senses that there is an analogy at work here, and that if only one knew the basis of the resemblance the logic of the answer would be clear. Or again, one suspects that there must be some obscure allusion behind phrases like “a lump of dried shit” or “three pounds of flax” that would provide the missing information needed to make sense of the kōan.

Here is where allusion and analogy in the kōan differ from allusion and allegory in Chinese literature. One could take “Two hands clap and make a sound. What is the sound of one hand?” as a symbolic analogue for “You know the duality of subject and object. What is the nonduality of subject and object?” The insight one has in seeing that “sound of one hand” means “nonduality of subject and object,” I will call horizontal insight. It takes one sideways from one phrase in language to another phrase in language. Such horizontal insight, however, does not solve a kōan. The kōan is solved only when one first realizes (makes real) the nonduality of subject and object in oneself, only when one becomes an instance of that nonduality oneself. It is for this reason that Zen masters instruct their students to become one with the kōan, to *be* the sound of one hand. The insight that arises from realizing the kōan, being the kōan, I will call vertical insight. Vertical insight takes one outside language to experience itself.

To repeat, the fundamental problem in solving a kōan is religious. It is not merely a literary matter of understanding allusion and analogy. It is not merely an epistemological matter of attaining a new kind of awareness, nor a matter of training and drilling oneself to a level of spontaneous improvisation. The kōan is both the means

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<sup>7</sup> Allegory, says Quintilian, “says one thing in words and another in meaning” (quoted in SAUSSY 1993, 13).

for, and the realization of, a religious experience that finally consumes the self. That experience is the final referent for the symbolic language of “a lump of dried shit,” “three pounds of flax,” or “the cypress tree in the courtyard.”

#### LITERARY GAMES

As we noted in the previous chapter, *kōan* have a family resemblance to games in which a pair of opponents are matched against each other in playful competition. The opponents think of themselves as military combatants, along the lines of many of the board games played in China and the West, and view the point of the *kōan* in terms of winning and losing. They deploy strategy and tactics—feinting, probing, closing in for a sudden strike, and so forth. Later we will consider some examples from the *Hekigan-roku*, where Engo’s *agyō* employ the military metaphor.<sup>8</sup>

Chinese, like many languages, employs parallelism in poetic verse: two or more lines with the same structure, rhythm, imagery, and sometimes phonetic rhyme. But the nature of the Chinese language, with its ideographic characters and its lack of inflection, makes the construction of parallel verses relatively easy, with the result that its literature contains an enormous number of paired verses, or couplets.<sup>9</sup> This sets the stage for the Chinese literary game called “capping phrases” or “capping verses” 語次 or 連句 (聯句).<sup>10</sup> This game can be played with two or four or even more persons. In a simple version of this game, one person gives the first line of a well-known couplet and challenges the other to recall the second line.<sup>11</sup> In a more complicated form of the game, one person composes the first line of a couplet and challenges the other to compose a matching verse with parallel structure, imagery, rhythm, etc. to form a couplet. It can also take the form of four people composing a quatrain, each providing a line that integrates into the whole. Or again, several people can work on an extended linked verse, each person composing a line of verse playing upon the rhythm, imagery, and characters of the previous verse. And so on.

Players made up rules over the years, such as restricting images to a given theme or rhyme or Chinese character. There was usually a time limit, often determined by

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<sup>8</sup> Board games themselves have family resemblances to divination by shamans, since a board game is related to a war game designed to predict the outcome of a proposed military venture. See NEEDHAM and RONAN 1978, 46–59, which includes a chart of the “genetic relationships” among games (p. 57), and also MARK 1979.

<sup>9</sup> For studies of parallelism in the Chinese language, see PLAKS 1988 and HIGHTOWER 1965. For parallelism in other cultures, refer to the Introduction to FOX 1988, 1–28.

<sup>10</sup> For a survey study of Chinese literary games, see POLLACK 1976. See also MINER 1979.

<sup>11</sup> Asai Gisen Rōshi, during a *teishō* that discussed capping-phrase games, used the memorable example, “See you later, alligator. / After a while, crocodile.”

the burning of a short stick of incense or a fixed length of candle. One person took on the role of host and judge, setting the rules and topic of that particular game and declaring the winner. Tokens, much like poker chips, were used to keep track of wins and losses. Penalties were imposed on the losers, such as having to down a round of drinks, perhaps even as much as “three pints of wine” (OWEN 1977, 275). Such poetry games, with their emphasis on competition, humor, repartee, and erudite invention, were a source of entertainment at all levels of society, from imperial banquets and parties hosted by influential officials to countryside outings and informal gatherings of literati in local drinking establishments. The products of these poetry competitions were not considered serious poetry, partly because the verses were composed just for entertainment and did not contain any morally uplifting message, partly because the quality of verse was much diluted by the wine consumed by the poets (POLLACK 1979, 1–59, 103). Poetry competition also came to be a regular feature of annual festivals such as the Double Ninth Festival and were used as a means of settling disputes, wooing maidens, and so on. In the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, it is through a poetry competition that the fifth patriarch decides who is to be his successor.

When the culture of literary games was transmitted to Japan, the Japanese extended the game to create “linked verse” (*renku* 連句/ 聯句 or *renga* 連歌). As POLLACK remarks, in China spontaneous verse-linking never lost its character as game and informal amusement, whereas in Japan it was invested with a high degree of seriousness and elevated to formal ceremony (1976, viii; also OWEN 1975, 116). In the case of Japanese *renku* or *renga*, a group of poets compose a 36-, 50-, or 100-verse linked poem, each poet adding a verse that continues the imagery of the previous verse but turns it in a new direction.<sup>12</sup> The game of *Hyakunin isshu* 百人一首, still typically played in Japan at the time of the New Year, is a well-known variation of this custom. It uses a standardized collection of one hundred couplets from one hundred different Japanese poets. The second verse of each couplet is printed on cards and scattered on the tatami mats between two people, usually a young lady and a young man dressed in their traditional New Year’s best. As the presiding official intones the first verse of one of the couplets, the young lady and the young man rush to snatch up the card with the matching verse. In an earlier more Confucian age, young men and women had little opportunity for interaction. Such a game, where for a brief instant one’s hand might brush against that of a member of the opposite sex, must have had an additional element of excitement.

The Zen *kōan* and the literary game share too many resemblances not to be considered close relatives. First, as already mentioned, like the players in a literary game, the dialogue partners in a *kōan* think of themselves as engaged in a competition that

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<sup>12</sup> For a historical account of *renku* (or *renga*) see KEENE 1977, MINER 1979. Examples of *renku* can be found in UEDA 1982, 69–111.

they imagine as a kind of military combat. They win; they lose. They engage in strategy, feinting, probing, using surprise, etc. Engo Kokugon's *agyo* to the various kōan in the *Hekigan-roku* clearly adopt the military metaphor. "He carries out his strategy from within his tent" (*Heki* 4, Main Case *agyo*); "He gives up his first position and falls back to his second" (*Heki* 10, Main Case *agyo*); "When you kill someone, make sure you see the blood" (*Heki* 31, Main Case *agyo*); "The sword that kills people, the sword that gives life" (*Heki* 34, Main Case *agyo*); "He captures the flag and steals the drum" (*Heki* 38, Main case *agyo*). In Chinese poetry composition, especially in the context of the imperial examinations, oftentimes characters were judged and careers were determined on the basis of their wit and ability to improvise on the spot (POLLACK 1976, 100). These same qualities are also highly valued in the Zen kōan tradition. An important phrase in the everyday vocabulary of a Zen monastery is *rinki ōhen* 臨機應變 "on-the-spot improvisation."

A second resemblance consists of the fact that in both the literary game and the kōan, players need to be skilled in the art of alluding to a subject without directly naming it. An early predecessor to the capping-verse game was the posing of riddles, a kind of charade in literary form. The practice used a verse form called *yung-wu* 詠物 "writing poetry about an object" or *fu-te* 賦得 "writing a poem on a topic received" (POLLACK 1976, 38, 39). The poet Hui Hung 惠洪 commented that the soul of *yung-wu* poetry was to "bring out the qualities (用) of a thing without bringing up its name" (POLLACK 1976, 44). The host would give each person a slip of paper with a word, perhaps the name of a household object like "broom" or "bucket," perhaps the name of an animal like "dragon" or "tiger." A clever verse referred to the object in such a way as to leave the other dumbfounded as to what it was.

Some of the verses that have found their way into Zen phrase books resemble these riddle-charades. For example:

10.317 扶過斷橋水 *Tasukatte wa dankyō no mizu o sugi,*  
伴歸無月村 *Tomonatte wa mugetsu no mura ni kaeru.*

It helps me cross the water where the bridge is broken;  
My companion as I return to the village without moon.

The poem is about a traveler's staff, which is unnamed but which anyone versed in Chinese literature would know, and this unnamed object in turn is a symbol for a further unnamed object in Zen. Consider the following examples:

ZRKS 10.65 披毛從此得 *Himō kore yori e,*  
作佛亦從他 *Sabutsu mo mata ta ni shitagau.*

Furred creatures are got from this,  
Making a Buddha depends on that.

- 10.19 依稀松屈曲 *Ikitari matsu no kukkyoku*,  
 彷彿石爛斑 *Hōfutsutari ishi no ranpan*.

It's crooked like the pine,  
 It's mottled like the stone.

In English translation, “this,” “that,” and “it,” indicate an unmentioned object. In a Zen context one has to ask, what might that unnamed object be?

In the third place, the criteria of a good win in both the literary game and the kōan are the same: surprise, deception, and “reversing the other’s spear.” Harada Ken’yū comments on the poetry of Han Yü:

The point in linked-verse poetry is to catch one’s opponent unawares. In doing this the writer is himself compelled by unforeseen detours, overhangs, obstacles and abrupt changes in rhythm. There is not time for either omissions or repetitions. Rather, by turning the tables on the handicaps brought by chance or the difficulties one’s opponent has thrown at one, a veritable storm of associations is stirred up.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, in the kōan dialogue monk and master probe each other with disguised allusions, trick questions, and baited traps. Skill in kōan dialogue is to be able to turn the tables against one’s opponent.

When a monk asks Baso, “Without getting involved in the ‘four propositions and the hundred negations,’ show me directly the point of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West,” Baso smoothly replies, “I’m tired today and can’t explain for you” (*Heki* 73 Main Case). The monk took this answer as a refusal to give an answer and did not recognize that this apparent refusal itself was a direct presentation of the point of coming from the West. The monk takes Baso’s answer as if it were a descriptive when actually it is a performative.<sup>14</sup> It is much the same as if one were to reply to the question, “What is amnesia?” with the answer “I forgot.” The answer, taken descriptively, is a refusal to answer, but taken performatively, is an actual example of what the question asks for. In admiration of the way that Baso has deceived the monk so skillfully, Engo comments in *agyō*, “The monk stumbled past without recognizing it” (*Heki* 73, Main Case *agyō*).

A truly skillful poet recognizes his opponent’s strategy, turns it around and uses it to deceive his opponent. When Zen monks do this, the feat is called “turning the other’s spear against him” (回槍頭來 or 回轉槍頭來, *Heki* 35, Main Case *agyō*; *Heki* 38, Main Case *agyō*; *Heki* 46, Main Case *agyō*) or “mounting the bandit’s horse to pursue

<sup>13</sup> Harada Ken’yū 原田憲雄, *Han Yu, Kanshi taikai* 11, 2 韓愈, 漢詩体系十一, quoted in POLLACK 1976, XII.

<sup>14</sup> See the discussion on performatives and descriptives in HORI 2000.

him” (騎賊馬趁賊 *Heki* 59, Main Case *agyo*). When, for example, a monk says to Jōshū, “As soon as there are words and speech, this is picking and choosing,” Jōshū cleverly lures the monk into words and speech by asking, “Why don’t you quote this saying in full?” Engo’s *agyo* here is “He mounts the bandit’s horse to pursue the bandit” (*Heki* 59, Main Case *agyo*).

The fourth and most significant resemblance between Chinese literary games and the Zen *kōan* is that they share a similar conception of “mind-to-mind transmission” *ishin denshin* 以心傳心. If Zen is “not founded on words and letters,” then it cannot be transmitted from one person to another through verbal explanation or intellectual interpretation. Nevertheless, the Zen tradition attaches great importance to the transmission of the dharma from master to disciple. If the transmission is verbal, then it must be done “mind-to-mind.” The story of Śākyamuni holding up a flower (MMK 6) provides the archetype. Surrounded by a group of disciples assembled to hear a discourse on the dharma, Śākyamuni merely held up a flower instead of speaking. No one reacted except his first disciple, Kāśyapa, who broke into a smile. Śākyamuni replied, “I have the all-pervading True Dharma, incomparable Nirvana, exquisite teaching of formless form. It does not rely on letters, and is transmitted outside scriptures. I now hand it to Mahā Kāśyapa” (adapted from SHIBAYAMA 1974, 59). Traditionally this story is cited as an example of how transmission in Zen transcends the realm of “words and letters.” But the notion of a mind-to-mind transmission outside of language did not originate with Zen. Rather, Zen adopted it from Chinese literary culture.

In Chinese literature the generally dominant place given to allusion and analogy means that language is often used to say one thing and mean another. If everything is said indirectly through allusion and analogy, emotional satisfaction in the game is only achieved if one’s opponent is possessed of the same skill and shares the same learned repertoire of literary knowledge. The players are not only opponents, they are also partners in an important sense. Indeed, the game is at its best when the opponent-partners are so well matched that each understands the other’s use of images, allusions, or turns of phrase without requiring anything to be explained or deciphered.<sup>15</sup>

In the Confucian literati tradition, such an intimate friend was called a *chiin* (知音; Ch. *chih-yin*), literally, a “connoisseur of sounds.” The term refers to the story of Po Ya, who played a lute-like stringed instrument known as the *ch’in*, and his intimate friend, Chung Tzu-ch’i:

Po Ya was a good lute player and Chung Tzu-ch’i was a good listener. Po Ya strummed his lute, with his mind on climbing high mountains; and Chung Tzu-

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<sup>15</sup> Stephen OWEN has a good study of the special intimacy between Meng Chiao and Han Yü as expressed in their linked verse (1975, especially 116–36).

ch'i said: "Good! Lofty like Mount T'ai!" When his mind was on flowing waters, Chung Tzu-ch'i said: "Good! Boundless like the Yellow River and the Yangtze!" Whatever came into Po Ya's thoughts, Chung Tzu-ch'i always grasped it. (GRAHAM 1960, 109–10; see also DEWOSKIN 1982, 105)

The pair were lifelong friends. When Chung Tzu-ch'i died, Po Ya smashed his lute and never played again. Although this episode appears in the *Lieh-tzu*, usually considered a Taoist text, the story of Po Ya and Chung Tzu-ch'i spread throughout Confucian literati culture, where ritual and music were the last two of the six arts of Confucian self-cultivation, and where the ability to play the *ch'in* was seen as a mark of a cultivated individual.<sup>16</sup> Its diffusion is also due to the fact that it symbolized an ideal widely accepted by all schools of thought, whether Taoist, Confucian, or Buddhist: that of *wu wei*, or non-action.

The ideal of *wu wei* does not refer to the simple refusal to take action. This is the crude interpretation ("crude" here being a technical term implying dualistic interpretation). Rather, *wu wei* is a cluster of overlapping concepts that describe the truly accomplished person: one who acts effortlessly without deliberation and conscious intention, without focussing on technique and means, without self-regard and self-consciousness. The true skill of the archer transcends mere technique with a bow and arrow, the true swordsman's ability (the so-called "sword of no-sword") is more than slash and parry with a sword; the true *ch'in* player communicates more than the sound of strings being plucked. Applied to speech, *wu wei* indicates such skill in the use of words that the speaker could communicate without words. This is the prototype for Zen "mind-to-mind transmission." Not only the Zen tradition but the entire educated world of China saw the epitome of learned discourse as one in which the partners were so learned that they communicated more through silence than through words.

Accomplishment in the non-action of *wu wei* always depended on being accomplished in action. First one mastered the bow and arrow or the sword or the *ch'in*. Only then could one push oneself to a state of extreme selflessness in which one could accomplish one's end without reliance on bow and arrow or sword or *ch'in*. The story of Po Ya and Chung Tzu-ch'i exemplified the perfection of those who had thus cultivated themselves in literature, ritual, and music. For the literati, mind-to-mind transmission transcended language not by rejecting it—the "crude" interpretation—but only by being firmly based in language.

Set against this larger context of Chinese literature, the Zen notion of mind-to-mind transmission appears to be a relatively late and particularized adaptation of an

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<sup>16</sup> DEWOSKIN 1982 documents the role that music and ideas about music played in Confucian literati culture.



ideal that had circulated in literary circles for centuries. The story of Po Ya and Chung Tzu-ch'i predates by hundreds of years the use of Zen phrases like "mind-to-mind transmission." The *Lieh-tzu*, once thought to date from the Warring States period in China, 403–222 BCE, is now placed around the 3rd or 4th century CE,<sup>17</sup> while the earliest known reference to the story in which "Śākyamuni holds up a flower" is thought to be in the *T'ien-sheng kuang-teng lu* 天聖廣燈錄, published in 1036, nearly seven centuries later (MZZ 135.612a). The story of Śākyamuni and Kāśyapa is now widely thought to imply that Zen experience is quite independent of words and letters, that to attain it one must unlearn language. If the story is read against the background of the tradition from which it comes, however, the lesson it teaches is that the ability to communicate mind-to-mind without language depends on first having mastered words and language.

Given this prior history, it is not surprising to find unidentified allusions to the story of Po Ya and Chung Tzu-ch'i and to the term "connoisseur (or 'hearer') of sounds" (J. *chiin*, Ch. *chih-yin* 知音) frequently in Zen literature, where they are adapted to emphasize the ineffability of the dharma in Zen. I cite four examples:

- 10.496 若識琴中趣 *Moshi kinchū no omomuki o shiraba,*  
何勞絃上聲 *Nanzo genjō no koe ni rō sen.*

When you appreciate the flavor of the lute,  
What need to use the sound from the strings?

- 14.88 掀翻海嶽覓知音 *Kaigaku o kenpon shite chiin o motomu,*  
箇箇看來日中斗 *Ko-ko mikitareba nitchū no to.*

I overturn the seas and mountains seeking an intimate,  
But it is like a one-by-one search for a star at noon.

- ZRKS 10. 440 金風吹玉管 *Kinpū gyokkan o fuku,*  
那箇是知音 *Nako ka kore chiin.*

The golden wind blows the jade flute,  
Who can appreciate this sound?

- 10.223 詩向快人吟 *Shi wa kaijin ni mukatte ginji,*  
酒逢知己飲 *Sake wa chiki ni aute nomu.*

My songs I sing to those who understand,  
Wine I drink with those who know me well.

What is the significance of the story for understanding Rinzai kōan practice? We are used to the idea in Zen writings that language distorts what originally is, that lan-

<sup>17</sup> GRAHAM 1960, xiii.

guage creates false dichotomies imposing artificial categories upon what naturally is, that language cannot transmit the real nature of things as they are.<sup>18</sup> For antecedents of this idea in earlier Chinese literature, one can go directly to the first chapter of the *Tao te ching* (“The Tao that can be spoken of is not the constant Tao”) or to the chapter “The Equality of All Things” in the *Chuang-tzu*. But there is another paradigm of language in Chinese literature. In the “expressive-affective conception of poetry” (SAUSSY 1993, 84), the feelings and emotions of the heart were said to naturally express themselves in words, music, and dance. The classic expression of this notion is found in the “Great Preface” to the *Book of Songs*:

Feeling is moved inwardly and takes form in speech. It is not enough to speak, so one sighs [the words]; it is not enough to sigh, so one draws them out and sings them; it is not enough to draw them out and sing them, so without one’s willing it, one’s hands dance and one’s feet stamp. (after SAUSSY 1993, 77)

Saussy notes that this passage in turn derives from the section on *Records of Music* in the *Record of Ritual* (*Li-chi* 禮記). There, expression in language is depicted as similar to expression in music: just as the melody in the heart spontaneously expresses itself in music, so feelings and emotions spontaneously express themselves in words, sighs, song, and dance. The result is poetry and language.<sup>19</sup>

The assumption is that if the writer’s feelings and emotions are expressed in words in spontaneous fashion, it becomes possible for the reader to follow the words back to those feelings and emotions. Stephen Owen speaks here of an underlying paradigm of “linguistic adequacy” according to which language was thought capable of expressing what is in the mind and heart of a writer. The chapter called “The Hearer

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<sup>18</sup> For an interesting critical discussion of the notion of the transcendence of language in Zen, see WRIGHT 1992.

<sup>19</sup> The language skeptic, who is wont to claim that language distorts and falsifies the real nature of things, is usually working with the “reference” theory of language, which assumes that a word is just a sound which gets meaning by being conventionally associated with an object. Words are assumed to refer to, denote, or label the object; the sentence is said to describe or report it. Since the relation of word to object, proposition to fact, is merely one of convention, it is always possible to raise doubt about the veracity of linguistic expression. In contrast, the “expressive-affective” theory claims that language is the natural expression of emotion and not just its conventional sign. Note the similarity between the “expressive-affective” theory of language and WITTGENSTEIN’S comments on “expression”: “The verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it” (1958, §244); “When someone says, ‘I hope he’ll come’—is this a report about his state of mind, or a manifestation of his hope?” (§585); “A cry is not a description. But there are transitions. And the words ‘I am afraid’ may approximate, more or less, to being a cry. They may come quite close to this and also be far removed from it” (§189).

of Sounds (*Chih-yin* 知音)” of the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* 文心雕龍 by Liu Hsieh 劉勰 puts it this way:

In the case of composing literature, the emotions are stirred and the words come forth; but in the case of reading, one opens the literary text and enters the emotions [of the writer], goes up against the waves to find the source; and though it be [at first] hidden, it will certainly become manifest. None may see the actual faces of the faraway age, but by viewing their writing, one may immediately see their hearts/minds.<sup>20</sup>

In reading a text, one follows words upstream to their source and enters into the emotions of the writer, reversing the natural and unbroken process by which the written word flows out of the writer’s heart. For two people whose cultivation is equally refined, language is not a medium of distortion and falsehood but the very vehicle for immediately seeing into one another’s heart and mind.

These two conceptions of language—one in which language is depicted as imposing conceptual categories that falsify experience and prevent us from seeing things as they are, and one in which language is depicted as the means by which people immediately know each other’s minds—are both at work in the *kōan*. For while the rhetoric of Zen constantly emphasizes the fact that it is “not founded on words and letters,” implying that language is always inadequate, the *kōan* practice in which one meditates on a critical phrase promises to transport the practitioner to the enlightened mind of the patriarchs. As WRIGHT remarks, “Given that these sayings epitomize the mental state from which they have come forth, if the practitioner could trace back (*hui-fan*) the saying to its source, he or she would at that moment occupy a mental space identical to that of its original utterer” (2000, 201). Then, in the words of Mumon, one will “see with the same eye and hear with the same ear” as the patriarchs (同一眼見同一耳聞, MMK 1).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in OWEN 1985, 59.

<sup>21</sup> One can see this pairing of different attitudes to language dramatized in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*. In the early part of the *Sutra*, the illiterate Hui-neng wins a poetry competition against the learned and erudite head monk, Shen-hsiu, thus dramatizing the teaching that Zen insight is not founded on words and letters. Yet the same Hui-neng as an aged master declares to his disciples:

You ten disciples, when later you transmit the Dharma, hand down the teaching of the one roll of the *Platform Sutra*; then you will not lose the basic teaching. Those who do not receive the *Platform Sutra* do not have the essentials of my teaching. . . . If others are able to encounter the *Platform Sutra*, it will be as if they received the teachings personally from me. (YAMPOLSKY 1967, 173)

The first part of the *Sutra* seems to emphasize that language is inadequate, while the latter part seems to subvert this view with the explicit claim that encountering the *Platform Sutra* is the same as encountering Hui-neng himself.

If one begins from the assumption that the Zen tradition has a single, fixed attitude to language—namely, that Zen is not founded on words and letters, and that language cannot express the awakened mind—then Rinzai literary kōan practices can only seem totally misguided. But once one recognizes that Rinzai Zen, like the Chinese literary tradition from which it developed, works with more than one paradigm of language, then the inclusion of literary study as part of kōan practice will be both natural and desirable.

There is one final family resemblance between the Zen kōan curriculum and the traditional Chinese system of imperial examination. In the light of the foregoing, this should come as no surprise. All things being equal, one might suppose that in a religious tradition that stresses sudden enlightenment, the authority of the leaders and teachers of the tradition would be based on a mystical, self-justifying charisma. And indeed, later literature depicts the Ch’an masters of the T’ang Dynasty as iconoclastic, individualistic, and exemplars of the superior authority of experience over literary scholarship. At the same time, the Rinzai kōan system, with its lengthy and detailed fifteen-year curriculum, is much closer to the meritocratic and bureaucratic text-based Chinese examination system for which candidates typically had to study fifteen years or more. In fact, those who successfully complete the Rinzai Zen curriculum need to develop many of the same skills that were required for successful completion of the imperial examinations—a prodigious ability to memorize long passages verbatim, the ability to compose elegant classical Chinese verse, a beautiful calligraphic hand, and so on. The closest present-day counterpart of the classical Chinese Confucian literati scholar is the Japanese Rinzai Zen rōshi. He is one of the last remaining examples of those whose daily lives involve use of the literati scholar’s four treasures: writing brush, ink stick, ink stone, and paper.

# 5

## The History of Zen Phrase Books

THE PRESENT VOLUME (*Zen Sand*) is an entirely new compilation that combines two twentieth-century Zen phrase books, the *Shinsan zengoshū* 新纂禪語集 (*A New Compilation of the Zen Phrase Collection*), edited by Tsuchiya Etsudō 土屋悦堂 under the direction of Unkankutsu Shaku Taibi Rōshi 雲關窟釋大眉老師 (Kichūdō 1973), and the *Kunchū zenrin kushū* 訓註禪林句集 (*Annotated Zen Sangha Verse Collection*), edited and revised by Shibayama Zenkei Rōshi 柴山全慶老師 (Kichūdō 1972). These two handbooks, standard possessions of practicing Rinzai monks, are the most recent additions to an ever-evolving line of Zen phrase books.

Zen phrase books (*kushū* 句集), along with *kōan* collections (*kōan-shū* 公案集), recorded sayings of the patriarchs (*goroku* 語錄), and collected biographies (*dentōroku* 傳燈錄), may be considered a minor subgenre of Japanese Zen literature. This chapter describes the different kinds of Zen phrase books. Broadly speaking, they include books of proverbs or wise sayings, handbooks compiled by early Zen monks as aids to composing Chinese poetry, dictionaries of Chinese dialect or colloquial language, and guidebooks for reading scrolls used in the tea ceremony. It will also attempt an overview of how the Rinzai *kōan* meditation practice developed and speculate on when the capping-phrase practice came to be incorporated. Finally, we will have a look at the five most important *kōan* capping-phrase books.

### EARLY ZEN PHRASE BOOKS

#### *Golden Phrase Collections: Kinkushū* 金句集

From ancient times in China and Japan there have existed collections of proverbs, wise sayings, pithy phrases drawn from Chinese literature, and maxims for everyday actions—“golden phrases.” A number of the classics of Chinese literature are in fact basically just such collections, the Confucian *Analects* and the *Tao-te ching* being probably the best-known examples. Such books served two purposes. For the wider public, they provided handy collections of memorable phrases that the educated person might consult in time of self-reflection. More specifically, they were also used as instruction books for school and home. During Japan’s Heian period, Minamoto no

Tamenori's *Worldly Phrases* (*Sezoku genbun* 世俗諺文), a selection of golden phrases garnered from classical Chinese texts, was used as such an instruction text. A similar collection, Sugawara Tamenaga's *Annotated "Tube and Calabash"* (*Kanreishō* 管蠡抄), was used during the Kamakura period (IRIYA 1996, 565). Various sorts of Golden Phrase Collections were compiled during the Muromachi period. By this time Zen monks, buoyed up by the literary culture of the Gozan, were beginning to assume the social role of teachers, and their Golden Phrase Collections accordingly came to include more and more phrases from Buddhist sources (IRIYA 1996, 565).

For the Western reader, the *Amakusaban kinkushū* 天草版金句集 is a particularly interesting example of a Golden Phrase Collection. In the late 1500s, the Jesuit Mission of Amakusa in Hizen, western Japan (the area straddling the borders of present-day Saga and Nagasaki Prefectures), published several works to help the Jesuit missionaries learn the language and culture of Japan, the better to propagate Christianity in Japan. One of these was entitled *Qincuxu*, a Portuguese romanization of *Kinkushū*. It was 47 pages long and contained 282 maxims that were probably intended for use by missionaries in their sermons to the Japanese. Each maxim is followed by a short Japanese commentary written not in Japanese *kana* but in Portuguese romanization. Because it is unclear precisely how some of the *kana* were pronounced at the time, the romanized text is invaluable for Japanese philological research, since there is far less ambiguity about the pronunciation of the Portuguese romanization. The maxims were drawn from a variety of Chinese sources such as the Confucian *Analects*, Chinese poetry, etc., as well as from Japanese sources such as the *Seventeen-Article Constitution* of Shōtoku Taishi. Approximately 77, or one-fourth of the sayings, coincide with phrases in the *Kuzōshi*, the Zen phrase book that had been compiled by Tōyō Eichō Zenji around a century earlier (SANAÉ 1996, 602–3). One of the reasons that Zen verses figure so prominently in the collection is that one of the Jesuits responsible for editing the text was formerly a Zen Buddhist (YOSHIDA 1938, 7).

### *Zen Poetry Composition Handbooks*

Monasteries in medieval Japan were often built to house émigré Chinese masters who ran their monasteries according to Sung Period Chinese monastery rules and who used Chinese language in their teaching (COLLCUTT 1981, 57–90). Under the direction of these monks, and of Japanese monks who had returned to Japan after training in China, early Japanese Zen monks had to become skilled in literary Chinese (POLLACK 1986, 111–57; KRAFT 1992, 51–54), which was used to compose verses for ritual occasions, to record dharma talks, to write monastery documents, and to carve inscriptions on icons and images. The monks at the time did not actually read the Chinese script as Chinese. Instead, the accomplished Japanese monk learned to read classical Chinese text, or *kanbun* 漢文, by giving it a Japanese reading, or *kundoku* 訓讀. This method of transposition attempted to approximate the Chinese pronunciation of the

Chinese characters while rearranging them in the order required by Japanese grammar. Although *kundoku* managed to preserve some of the terseness of the Chinese original and some resemblance to Chinese pronunciation, the elements of tone and rhyme, so important for Chinese poetry, were lost in the process. Unlike Chinese, Japanese does not use tones. As a result, words that can be distinguished tonally in Chinese—high, low, falling, rising, and other variations—ended up as sounding alike in Japanese.

The rules of Chinese poetry divided characters into two basic tone classes, “flat” and “oblique” 平仄 (*J. hyōsoku*, Ch. *p’ing-tse*). Each kind of poetry (5-character 8-line regular verse, 7-character “cut-off” quatrains, and so forth) had its own set of complicated rules to determine the flat/oblique tone for every character in every line. Chinese poetry also used end rhymes, and different kinds of Chinese poetry were accompanied by rules specifying which lines were supposed to rhyme. When the Japanese transposed Chinese into their own grammar and pronunciation, these elements of tone and rhyme were lost. Nonetheless, a Japanese writer accomplished in *kanbun* was expected to compose Chinese prose and poetry according to the Chinese rules of tone and rhyme, and for this had to rely on guidebooks to tell him what character matched with what. (In fact, by the end of the T’ang Dynasty most Chinese themselves needed handbooks of rhyme and tone in order to write poetry correctly, since the Chinese language had itself changed considerably from the time when rhyme and tone were first codified.<sup>1</sup>)

Chinese poetry, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is allusive and allegorical. To become proficient in Chinese poetry, one had constantly to study the vast corpus of received literature, tracking down both the source of an allusion for its original meaning and also the many later applications of the allusion that colored the nuances it later came to carry. For this reason, from quite early on handbooks of words and allusions, sanctioned by classical precedent, were compiled in China. An example is the *I-wen lei-chü* 藝分類聚 (*Literary Writings Classified*), compiled by Ou-yang Hsün 歐陽詢 in the T’ang Dynasty (POLLACK 1976, 46; see also OWEN 1977, 281–93). The early Japanese Zen monks made their own handbooks in which were gathered together verses that would serve as the basis for later examples of allegory and allusion. One such handbook is the *Jōwashū* 貞和集 (*Collection of the Jōwa Era*), in which the Zen poet-monk Gidō Shūshin 義堂周信 (1325–1388) collected some three thousand poems by Chinese monks (Bussho Kankōkai 1983). His diary, *Kūge nichiyō kufū ryakushū* 空華日用工夫略集 (*Summary Collection of Flowers of Emptiness from Daily Practice*, GIDŌ 1939), also contains numerous examples of verses from Chinese poetry. In his study of extant examples of these poetry composition handbooks,

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<sup>1</sup> Pollack, personal correspondence, 18 May 1999.

SANAE reports that their users added numerous marginal notes and attached slips of paper with further examples of compounds, usages, and so forth. These early books were copied by hand, and as the copyist usually incorporated the additional examples from these glosses and inserts into the body of the text, later versions of the same collection quickly became fuller and more detailed (1996, 581).

The handbook most useful for the composition of poetry was the *Shūbun inryaku* 聚分韻略 (*Classified Rhymes*), compiled in 5 fascicles by Kokan Shiren 虎關師鍊 in 1306 (KIMURA 1995). In it some 8,000 *kanji* were classified according to rhyme and tone class, and within each class the *kanji* were further divided according to meaning under headings such as Heaven and Earth, Season, Plants, Food and Clothing, Artifacts, etc. Each *kanji* was fitted out with a short explanation and examples of compounds in which it appeared. This dictionary proved to be so useful for looking up the flat/oblique tone and rhyme class of *kanji* when composing poetry that it seems to have become something of a best-seller in its time. It was widely circulated in several sizes, including a small portable edition and a larger edition with a wide margin at the top for notes (SANAE 1996, 582).

Poetry composition handbooks were similar in purpose and function. They collected together important and beautiful examples of verse and then categorized them according to rhyme, that is, according to the sound of the final character. First the verses were divided according to the total number of characters they contained (4-character verses, 5-character verses, 7-character verses, etc.). Then they were further grouped according to the rhyme class of the final character. In the first section, for example, the top margin might contain the character 東, pronounced *tung* in Chinese, and below it would be listed all verses ending with characters that rhymed with 東 *tung*, such as 同 *t'ung*, 中 *chung*, and 風 *feng*. Each of the following sections would be headed by a character marking a rhyme class and would contain verses that all have similar end rhyme. In the *Zenrin kushū*, the Rinzai capping-phrase book edited by Ijūshi, several sections contain a supplement in which the verses are ordered according to their final character in exactly this way.

A great many such poetry handbooks were produced in the period from the Kamakura period through the early Edo period. The earliest were handwritten and later versions were set in type; some of them have identifiable authors, others are anonymous; some give only the Chinese characters, while others supply varying degrees of annotative information. Noteworthy among these books is the *Tentetsushū* 點鐵集, a clear predecessor of the *Zenrin kushū*. Compiled by Gyakuō Sōjun 逆翁宗順 (1433–1488) in 1485, its 25 fascicles in 10 volumes contain a massive collection of 4-character, 5-character, and 7-character couplets from both Buddhist and non-Buddhist sources. In this, the largest of the poetry composition books, approximately 43,000 verses were categorized in rhyme classes with headnotes citing original sources (SANAE 1996, 583; IRIYA 1996, 572).



Books designed specifically for the composition of Zen poetry have continued to be produced in modern times. One of the most recent is the *Zenrin yōgo jiten* 禪林用語辞典 (*Dictionary of Zen Sangha Language*) compiled by Iida Rigyō and published in 1994. The first half is a dictionary of Zen terms and phrases from 1 character to 7 characters in length (traditional Chinese poetry did not often use lines longer than 7 characters). For each character of each verse, the flat/oblique tone is indicated, allowing nonspeakers of Chinese to follow the rules for ordering tone. The second half consists of a series of indices providing information necessary to the composer of Chinese style verse—characters divided into rhyme class, characters having two pronunciations, a pronunciation index of all characters listed in the first half, etc.

The latest development in Chinese poetry composition aids is the appearance of numerous Internet web sites devoted to Chinese poetry in the Japanese, Chinese, and Korean languages. The sites vary in content but many provide the original Chinese characters, with translation into modern languages, of famous classical poems. Some offer quite specialized collections, such as the site that provides the Chinese poetry written by the Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitarō (<http://user2.allnet.ne.jp/nisino/kansi/a003.html>). Others are fitted out with audio capability allowing one to hear a reading of the poems in Chinese. Many of these sites provide detailed explanations and step-by-step instructions on how to compose Chinese poetry, with a billboard where newly composed poems can be posted for all to see.

One site in particular ([www.vector.co.jp/soft/dl/win95/edu/s0154206.html](http://www.vector.co.jp/soft/dl/win95/edu/s0154206.html)) is especially useful to the Zen practitioner who has to compose Chinese poetry. Created by the priest of a Zen temple, the site contains a database of Zen poetry based on parts of the *Zenrin kushū* and the *Zenrin geju* 禪林偈頌 (*Zen Sangha Ritual Verses*, composed for ritual occasions such as funerals, founder's day ceremonies, consecration of buildings, etc.) and a *Kanshisen* 漢詩撰 (*Selected Chinese Poetry*) composition tool. The computer poet does not need to know the rules for tone or rhyme since the site provides a template with the flat/oblique tone requirement for every character space of every line as well as the rhyme requirements for the final characters of any line. In the database of poetic phrases, all characters are identified as flat or oblique, making it easy to select out phrases to match the template. It is said that in some golden age in the past, all Zen monks were educated enough in classical Chinese poetry composition to compose their own capping verses. With the invention of this Zen poetry computer composition tool, the golden age may be about to dawn again.

### *Dialect Books, Hōgo* 方語

Among early Zen phrase books were a class of books called *Hōgo*, literally “local speech.” The Zen *kōan* collections and the records of the Zen patriarchs contain numerous examples of vulgar, colloquial, or dialect Chinese that the Japanese did not

understand and that required explanation.<sup>2</sup> The headnotes of the *Zenrin kushū*, the classic capping-phrase book, identify many of its phrases as *hōgo* and provide an explanation. For example, verse 4.122 reads *Mimi o ōte suzu o nusumu* 掩耳偷鈴, meaning “He covers his ears to steal the bell.” The headnote explains it as *hōgo* for *Donzoku* 鈍賊, “Clumsy thief.” Verse 4.192 reads *Reiki o o hiku* 靈龜曳尾, “The spirit turtle sweeps its tail,” and the headnote identifies it as *hōgo* for *Ato o haratte ato shōzu* 拂跡跡生, “Erasing traces creates traces.” Or again, verse 4.230, *Jisa jiju* 自作自受, “Make it yourself, receive it yourself,” is identified as a *hōgo* with the nuance: *Shōnin kase o tsukuru* 匠人作枷, “The master carpenter makes his own fetters” (a Chinese equivalent for “being hoisted on one’s own petard”). As is to be expected, dictionary-like collections of such vulgar, dialectic, and colloquial phrases with accompanying explanations were compiled over time. Two kinds of *hōgo* texts were made in Japan: those based on the Chinese learned by the Japanese monks who had gone to China during the Sung (960–1279 CE) and Yüan periods (1260–1368), and those composed during the Ming (1368–1644) and Ch’ing (1644–1911) periods, when monks of the Ōbaku sect from China arrived in Japan (SANAÉ 1996, 586).

While poetry composition guidebooks helped the Japanese Zen monks learn the classical high culture of T’ang and Sung China, the *hōgo* guidebooks helped familiarize them with low culture. Although the first generation of monks who compiled guidebooks knew they were dealing with colloquial language, most Japanese Zen monks of subsequent generations were probably incapable of distinguishing between literary and colloquial Chinese. Iriya argues that Japanese Zen monks not only mistakenly took Chinese colloquialisms as technical Zen terminology, but also used the strange-sounding Japanized Chinese as a kind of in-house trademark to indulge in elitist attempts to distinguish themselves from other schools of Buddhism (IRIYA 1996, 567).

#### CAPPING PHRASES AND THE KŌAN CURRICULUM

When did the first capping-phrase collections for monks appear? One would think it but a short single step from golden phrase books, Chinese poetry composition handbooks, and Chinese colloquial phrase and dialect books to these capping-phrase books. Actually, it is a rather long single step.

How did the *kōan* practice develop? Although much of the history remains obscure, the general outlines are emerging. In the very early period during the seventh and eighth centuries, when Ch’an was developing as a separate school within Chinese Buddhism, the meditation taught in Ch’an temples must have followed

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<sup>2</sup> KAWASE argues, however, that *hōgo* means *rakusetsu* (“convenient, advantageous”) and is an appropriate title for an introductory handbook (1942, 126).

Indian models closely. It would have focused on *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, calmness and insight, and would have instructed the meditator to concentrate on breathing and visualizing parts of the body. The founder of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai school, Chih-i 天台智顛 (538–597), entitled one of his meditation texts *Hsiao chih-kuan* 小止觀, usually translated “The Lesser Calming and Contemplation.”<sup>3</sup> The “calming” and “contemplation” in its title are actually translations of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. This text seems to have been the seed text of nearly all later Ch'an meditation manuals for several centuries, right up until the time of Dōgen in the thirteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Early Ch'an monks aimed at calm and contemplation when they meditated; they did not work on the kōan for the simple reason that the kōan had not yet been invented.

The kōan began as stories of “encounter dialogues” between Zen masters and their disciples (J. *kien mondō* 機緣問答). These dialogues were considered a special kind of story. Almost all introductory explanations of the kōan include the quotation of a well-known passage from Chung-feng Ming-pen 中峯明本 (J. Chūhō Myōhon, 1263–1323) explaining that the story is a “public record.” In much the same way that a magistrate's decision in a court of law sets a precedent for the correct application of the law to a particular case, so, too, the kōan encapsulates and establishes a correct insight into the dharma of the buddhas and patriarchs.<sup>5</sup> In addition, these stories were used not merely as case studies exemplifying a certain theoretical principle, but also as practical devices to teach and to test Zen practitioners on their own insight. When these stories began to be used explicitly as teaching and testing devices, we may say the kōan was born.

The actual date of birth is, however, uncertain. An early example of the use of the term “kōan” in this sense appears in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (J. *Keitoku dentō-roku*), where the biography of the Ch'an monk Ch'en Tsun-su (780?–877?) includes the passage: “When the Master saw a monk approaching, he said, ‘For an on-the-spot kōan, I give you thirty blows.’”<sup>6</sup> It is an open question, however, whether this use of the term “kōan” represents usage at the time of Ch'en Tsun-su (780?–877?) or at the time of the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* published in the eleventh century (1011). McRae speculates that the characteristic Ch'an encounter dialogue can first be spotted in the records of the teaching of Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–788), but here again the same sort of problem appears: the records of Ma-tsu did not appear until

<sup>3</sup> The full name of the version in the Taishō canon is 修習止觀坐禪法要 (T 46.462–75).

<sup>4</sup> See the study by BIELEFELDT 1986.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, MIURA and SASAKI 1966, 7–10; ITŌ 1970, 1–10; AKIZUKI 1987, 26–7; FOULK 2000, 21–2.

<sup>6</sup> T 51.291b17.

two centuries later in 952, in the *Tsu-t'ang chi* 祖堂集 (J. *Sodō-shū*, *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall*).<sup>7</sup>

Even as the *kōan* was being invented outside the monastery walls, monks on the inside were still engaged in Indian-style meditation. In the Sung period (960–1279), Ch'an meditation practice changed. The Chinese Ch'an master Ta-hui Tsung-kao 大慧宗杲 (J. Daie Sōkō, 1089–1163) abandoned meditation based on *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* practices to create a distinctively Ch'an-style meditation practice called *k'an-hua* 看話, contemplation of the “critical phrase.” In addition to using the *kōan* as a teaching and testing device, Ta-hui saw that the *kōan* could be used as a focal point in meditation. To use the entire story of an encounter dialogue would encourage discursive thinking. Therefore, Ta-hui isolated the critical phrase (*hua-t'ou* 話頭) in the dialogue, forcing the meditator to penetrate the *kōan* by a completely different route from that of the intellectual understanding. By boring into the critical phrase, he felt, the meditator would break free of conceptualization and at the same time be overtaken by profound doubt. As this doubt turned away from exterior objects to be directed back to the self, self-doubt grew so large as to absorb the self in its entirety, ultimately destroying all distinction between subject and object, between the doubt and the *hua-t'ou*.<sup>8</sup> The conventional self was destroyed in the Great Death, out of which there would step an awakened self.

The creation of *k'an-hua* meditation planted the seed out of which formal monastic *kōan* meditation practice grew. It is difficult to determine precisely when monastic *kōan* meditation training began, but, whenever it got started, in its early years it was very different from the *kōan* training carried on in Japanese Rinzai monasteries today. Early Chinese Ch'an masters gave *kōan* instruction to groups of disciples. The texts often depict a master mounting the podium and posing a *kōan* to the assembled monks standing below, who in turn seem to be competing with each other to display their insight. In present-day Rinzai practice, this kind of group practice has been replaced completely by the meeting of master and disciple in a private room. Chinese monasteries, as well as Japanese monasteries in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, housed hundreds of monks, so that the practice of *nyusshitsu* 入室 (“entering the room”), in which monks went individually to receive instruction from the master could not have taken place on a daily basis. Chinese Ch'an texts often describe monks struggling with a single *kōan* for several years, whereas in modern Rinzai practice monks work quickly through a detailed succession of *kōan*.

It is unlikely that Ch'an monks in the T'ang or Sung periods thought of *kōan* practice as organized into a system or curriculum, as is the case today. Chinese Ch'an monks roamed freely from monastery to monastery in search of authentic *kōan*

<sup>7</sup> See McRAE 2000, 51.

<sup>8</sup> I am following BUSWELL's account (1987, 343–56); see also YŪ 1979.

teachers, but in modern Japan the Rinzai monk enters one monastery and stays there unless circumstances require a transfer. Despite the formalization and heavy institutional framework, however, modern Japanese Rinzai kōan practice is still easily recognizable as *k'an-hua* meditation.

As mentioned earlier, kōan practice did not initially include the capping-phrase practice. Appending capping phrases to kōan was something that Ch'an masters did, not ordinary Ch'an monks. Already by the mid tenth century collections of "old cases" 古則 were being made. One such early work by Fun'yō Zenshō 汾陽善昭 (Fen-yang Shan-chao, 947–1024), called *Fun'yō mutoku zenji goroku* 汾陽無德禪師語錄 (*Fen-yang wu-te ch'an-shih yü-lu*; T 47: 594–629), contains three collections of 100 kōan each, one of which consists of 100 *jakugo* appended to old cases. The other two consist of 100 new kōan that he himself made and 100 old cases for which he provided new answers.

Kenneth Kraft's study of Daitō Kokushi 大燈國師 (1282–1337), the founder of Daitoku-ji and one of the founders of Rinzai Zen in Japan, provides ample evidence that the practice of appending *jakugo* was transmitted from China directly into Rin-zai Zen in Japan in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (KRAFT 1992). The *Record of Daitō* contains Daitō's commentaries to kōan and kōan texts in which he expresses his responses through capping phrases, of which more than two thousand are spread throughout the *Record*. In his capping phrases Daitō applies traditional Zen verses to new situations and also composes new *jakugo* of his own. In a text entitled simply *Hyakunijussoku* 百二十則 (*One Hundred and Twenty Cases*), Daitō selected 120 kōan to which he has appended interlinear *jakugo*. In another text, *Hekigan agyo* 碧巖下語 (*Hekigan Capping Phrases*), Daitō substituted his own *jakugo* for those appended by Setchō and Engo to the hundred cases of the *Hekigan-roku*. Also significant for a history of the Zen phrase book is an untitled, undated, and unsigned manuscript attributed to Daitō that brings together some 900 capping phrases. If this manuscript was indeed compiled by Daitō Kokushi, it would represent the first capping phrase collection in Japan, predating Tōyō Eichō's *Kuzōshi* by approximately one hundred and fifty years (KRAFT 1992, 210–2).<sup>9</sup>

Ikkyū Sōjun 一休宗純 (1394–1481), in his *Jikaishū* 自戒集 (*Self Precept Collection*), records that as part of the opening ceremonies for a new training hall in 1455—a little more than a century after Daitō—he directed several training activities, including *suiji jakugo* 垂示著語 "Introducing a kōan, appending a verse" (cited in SANAE 1996, 603). In hindsight it seems only natural that the practice of *jakugo* should have taken root within Japanese Zen, not simply because Japanese Zen monks attempted to replicate the practices of their Chinese teachers, but also because much of the literary ambience of Chinese elite culture had also been transplanted to Japan, an ambience

<sup>9</sup> See HIRANO 1988 for a collection of the sayings themselves.

in which poetry was the vehicle of official documents, in which poetic skill was considered the mark of education and intelligence, and in which compendia of verses (類聚) were organized and consulted as encyclopedia.

The practice of creating linked verses or *renga* 連歌 had become a social activity in Japan, supported by members of the imperial family, the warrior class, and the priesthood. In his study of Japanese linked poetry, Miner claims that, during the Momoyama period (1573–1603), the craze for *renga* resembled the tulip mania of Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Lavish banquets and expensive prizes were given to those proficient enough to be declared a Renga Master (MINER 1979, 50). In the Gozan culture of the Kamakura (1185–1333) and Muromachi periods (1338–1573), the writing of poetry was widely considered to be a form of Buddhist practice. It is not surprising, then, that even in the relatively strict and orthodox environment of the Rinzai monastery, training practices should have evolved to include some of the subsidiary activities of a widespread culture of poetry, including that of capping phrases.<sup>10</sup>

TŌYŌ EICHŌ'S *KUZŌSHI* AND IJŪSHI'S *ZENRIN KUSHŪ*

At some point in the evolution of Rinzai monastic practice—we are not sure when—the Zen master's practice of appending capping phrases to *kōan* became the Zen monk's practice in *kōan* training.

Every monk in his individual practice was expected to emulate the great T'ang and Sung Chinese masters in appending a capping phrase that expressed his insight into a particular *kōan*. For this a capping-phrase book is necessary. In Zen monasteries it is often said that in times past Zen monks were well educated and could compose their own Chinese verse capping phrases, whereas modern-day monks lack the training in classical literature to compose such verses on their own. Instead, they turn to a handbook to seek out an appropriate verse.

There were, of course, in every period a handful of monks literate in classical Chinese, but it is doubtful if there was ever a golden age in which all or most Zen monks could manage composition in *kanbun*. In fact, most monks were functionally illiterate and had difficulty reading, let alone composing, Chinese-style verse.<sup>11</sup> Rather than suppose, therefore, that the incorporation of the capping-phrase practice into monastic training explains the emergence of the capping-phrase book, it makes more sense to argue that the cause-effect relation was reversed, that the creation and spread

<sup>10</sup> For more detailed discussion of the link between poetry and Buddhist practice, see KRAFT 1992, POLLACK 1986, and EBERSOLE 1983.

<sup>11</sup> In Japan, there was even a tradition of illiterate Zen masters that continued into modern times (KATŌ 1998).

of these manuals are what made possible the incorporation of the *jakugo* practice into monastic training.

Two texts in particular are important for an understanding of the early history of Zen *jakugo* handbooks: the *Kuzōshi* compiled by Tōyō Eichō and the *Zenrin kushū* compiled by Ijūshi.

*Kuzōshi* 句雙紙 (*Verse Notebook*)

The first two capping-phrase texts, the *Kuzōshi* compiled at the end of the 1400s by Tōyō Eichō Zenji 東陽英朝禪師 (1426–1504) and the *Zenrin kushū* 禪林句集 compiled in 1688 by Ijūshi 已十子 (n. d.), should be discussed together, even though their composition is separated by nearly two centuries. There is a fair amount of looseness in the titling and attribution of authorship for these two texts. Both the terms *Kuzōshi* and *Zenrin kushū* came to be used as generic names for Zen phrase collections. Presently the term *Zenrin kushū* is often used to refer to all monastic capping-phrase books. Moreover, the *Zenrin kushū* is often said to have been edited by Tōyō Eichō even though the work was published nearly two hundred years after his death.<sup>12</sup>

The first collection of Zen capping phrases in Japan seems to have been the untitled text attributed to Daitō Kokushi mentioned above. The document does not appear to be a handbook used by monks engaged in appending verses to kōan as a regular assignment in kōan practice. Most likely it was restricted to the personal use of the master.

The first Zen phrase book used as a capping-phrase handbook for kōan practice was probably the *Kuzōshi*, compiled by Tōyō Eichō Zenji (1426–1504). A priest in the Myōshin-ji lineage, Tōyō Eichō received the *inka*, or certification of enlightenment, from Sekkō Sōshin. He served as temple abbot at both Daitoku-ji and Myōshin-ji, founded the temple Shōtaku-in, and established the Shōtaku sublineage within the Myōshin-ji line.<sup>13</sup> He entitled his compilation of Zen verses *Kuzōshi*, but the exact date is uncertain. Indeed it is difficult to identify anything corresponding to a “publication” of the work, in either the sense of the completion of a printed copy or in that of making it public. KAWASE (1942, 120) estimates that the *Kuzōshi* was probably completed after Bunmei, that is, after 1486. Prior to that work Tōyō Eichō had compiled earlier collections known as the *Zensen* 前箭 (*First Arrow*) and the *Gosen* 後箭 (*Later Arrow*),<sup>14</sup> which would indicate that the compiling of Zen phrases was an ongoing project for him, perhaps without a clearly defined date of completion in

<sup>12</sup> For studies of the *Kuzōshi*, its commentary texts, and the *Zenrin kushū*, see IRIYA 1996, KAWASE 1942, SANAE 1996, YANAGIDA 1975, YOSHIDA 1941.

<sup>13</sup> See bibliographical entry at ZGDJT 84c.

<sup>14</sup> *Zensen wa nao karuku gosen wa fukashi* 前箭猶輕後箭深: “The first arrow still struck lightly, the later arrow went deep.”

mind. All of these versions were written by hand and were most likely shown originally only to a small number of disciples.<sup>15</sup>

The *Kuzōshi* was compiled more than five hundred years ago, and in the centuries immediately following served as the model for numerous other versions that copied, expanded, or otherwise imitated it (including the *Amakusaban kinkushū*, mentioned above).<sup>16</sup>

The array of extant *Kuzōshi* texts shows a great many differences. Some versions provide full readings in (usually) *katakana*, along with margin symbols to indicate order of reading of characters. Others provide only margin symbols and the *katakana* for a few verb endings and difficult *kanji*. Of the four texts included in KIMURA and KATAYAMA 1984, one provides no explanation of meaning, while three provide *kokoro*, explanations of meaning of varying length and detail. None of the four cites the original sources. These differences need not detain us here. One feature, however, is worth mentioning: the order in which the phrases are classified.

Basically there are two ways of classifying phrases in the *Kuzōshi* texts, by number of characters and by topic. The former is the simpler, taking into account only the number of characters in each verse. The Hōsa Bunko text is an example of this system, containing 1219 phrases ranging from 1 to 14 characters in length and ordered as 1-character, 2-character, 3-character, 4-character, 5-character, 6-character, 7-character,

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of Tōyō Eichō Zenji and the texts that may have served him as models, see KAWASE 1942; YOSHIDA 1941, 1174–5; and SANAE 1996, 60–2.

<sup>16</sup> Despite the existence of several generations of copies and variations of the original text, frequently entitled simply *Kuzōshi* or *Kuzōshishō* 句雙紙抄 (*Annotated Kuzōshi*), this text was not widely available in the twentieth century until quite recently. In 1984, Kimura and Katayama published, in a limited and private edition, photographic facsimiles of four of these early *Kuzōshi* texts:

1. the Muraguchi private collection text reprinted by the Kotenseki Fukusei Sōkan Kankōkai 古典籍複製叢刊行会 (Association for the Reproduction of Classic Texts);
2. the Meireki 2 (1656) woodblock print in the possession of the Komazawa University Library;
3. the unsigned handwritten copy in the possession of the Hōsa Bunko in Nagoya that is estimated to date from mid-Muromachi to early Edo (early 1500s to mid-1600s); and
4. a Genroku 6 (1693) woodblock print text from the Komazawa University Library.

In 1991, KITA published a photo-reproduction of a handwritten copy of the *Kuzōshishō* 句雙紙抄 (*Annotated Kuzōshi*) from the Doi collection that dates from early Edo, and supplied a detailed index of all the words that appear in the annotations. In 1996 Yamada, Iriya, and Sanae reissued a version of the *Kuzōshi* based on the Hōsa Bunko text (number 3 in the list above). This reproduction of the text is accompanied by substantial essays written by Iriya and Sanae on the development of the *Kuzōshi* texts (YAMADA et al. 1996). In 2000 the Zen scholar Yanagida Seizan published a photo reproduction of probably a late Edo-period *Kuzōshi* in volume 10B of the *Zengaku tenseki sōkan* series (YANAGIDA and SHIINA 2000).



永木集 卷五

還識此人否第卷第二則 容華若桃李文選曹子  
 心同虛空界東空則 山高日出遲會元續畧  
 雲消山嶽露會元續畧 日出海天清上天下  
 白雲抱幽石寒山詩 魚可魚不可論語微子篇  
 急急如律令類五說法門 下學而上達論語憲問篇  
 先難而後獲詔雍也篇 過則勿憚改同學而篇  
 日三省吾身同學而篇 莫塗糊人好住山門

○ 現成公案三師佛說五教祖師說未各六別或儒或道吉說  
 畢竟同一如不爾本分凡其派總皆發滄故曰但莫僧變洞然明白  
 同河合海

五言對句

水流元入海 月落不離天五燈會元卷十六  
 鏡分金殿燭 山答月樓鐘詩武即寄洞山詩  
 麝香眠石竹 鸚鵡啄金桃杜律卷二本註  
 臘雪連天白 春風逼谷寒禪林類聚卷  
 頭寒此時意 三更過孟津又点缺真出  
 山花閑似錦 澗水湛如藍碧岩八十二則大電  
 語不冷人會 須得人譚之普賢河九子禪六章  
 智人之明 整佛法之至論又点缺出  
 說說眾生說三世 一時說人天眼目卷上

Photo reproduction of pages from the *Zenrin kushū*, probably printed in the late Edo period. Victor Sogen Hori collection. The pages are of 5-character (above) and 7-character (below) phrases and couplets, and are marked with *kairiten*. The small characters at the top and running down the sides are annotations. The small characters under the phrases themselves indicate recent sources.

蜀宮諸葛  
泉僧

本來成佛非他得中舉先心若真時道易親同上

誰云思誰  
孰是誰

直下本來無一妄同上萬里無雲孤月圓鹿堂集

六月火雲飛  
劫外靈枝不帶春

六月火雲飛白雲中舉先十方世界銀渾侖同上

百草頭邊風  
莫謬如來正法輪

劫外靈枝不帶春空谷集梅花枝上月三更中舉上

兩句本經  
敘文

百草頭邊風凛凛中舉上千古萬古與人看則頌

自白  
傳

莫謬如來正法輪證道歌自古上賢猶不識鹿堂集

乘石頭傳  
十四卷為

學方便中真方便大誓會無修證中真修證同上

者不能知  
上階亦不

文彩縱橫意自殊從管產未亡見者休尋覓中舉上

三人行必有  
我師

三人行必有我師本論語述而篇

太平天子恩  
如海

太平天子恩如海薩天錫集

○同安十玄談轉如鑪湯灼炭吹教滅詩安尽情忘長劫解不踏蓮花詞

傳九北  
五同安祭

七言對

鑪湯爐炭吹教滅劍樹刀山喝便摧五州會元卷六

須彌座下烏龜子莫符重遭點額回詩

只願君王相顧意臨臺幾度畫蛾眉厚之黃禪語

泉列自家酒三盞喫了猶言味消唇傳

五鳳樓前問洛陽金鞭遙指御街長晉州

眼中童子目前人水底金烏天上日會元卷十六

甚逢敵手難藏行詩到軍吟始見功

看騎鉄馬入軍城勅下傳聞六國詩

一曲兩曲無人會雨過夜塘秋水深碧九七則三

景道

神水集

8-character, 10-character (5-character couplets), 12-character (6-character couplets), and 14-character (7-character couplets) verses.

Classification by topic is more complicated. One standard system of topics was “Eight Realms” (*hakkyōgai* 八境界), which were usually listed as “The Fundamental, Realization, Appearance, Cutting, Direct Pointing, Benefiting Others, Dynamic Connection, and Great Awakening” (本分, 現成, 色相, 裁斷, 直指, 爲人, 機關, 大悟).<sup>17</sup> Within each Realm, the verses were usually listed according to whether the verse was a single line or a couplet, and then according to the number of characters. This produced the following kind of order:

- The Fundamental: 4-character couplets, 4-character singles, 5-character couplets, 5-character singles, 6-character singles, 7-character singles;
- Realization: 4-character couplets, 4-character singles, 5-character couplets, 5-character singles, 6-character singles, 7-character singles;
- Appearance: 4-character couplets, 4-character singles, 5-character couplets, 5-character singles, 6-character singles, 7-character singles.

And so on for Eight Realms. As can be seen in the Muraguchi Kotenseki text, however, some editions added further topical subclasses to the Eight Realms. In the Muraguchi text these are abbreviated (関, 兩, 落, etc.), and since no explanation accompanies the abbreviations, one can only make educated guesses as to what they mean. Some Zen phrase books abandoned the Eight Realms classification system altogether, substituting their own classification schemes with as many as fifty and sixty different topic classes (YANAGIDA 1975, 2–6; YOSHIDA 1941, 1176–7; SANAE 1996, 594–7).

The Hōsa Bunko text, though ordered according to number of characters, recognizes that the verses can also be categorized into topical classes. At the top of each verse are printed small characters like 本, 學, 機, 用, and so on. These probably indicate some sort of topical classification, but no actual listing of subclasses is given. One has to assume that those who regularly used such handbooks knew what these abbreviations referred to.

By the time of Tōyō Eichō, the Rinzai kōan curriculum had likely evolved to the point where monks were being required to append *jakugo* to kōan, although the practice must still have been in its incipient stages. His *Kuzōshi* contains only a few more than 1,200 verses. If the *Kuzōshi* was being used as a handbook to support a

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<sup>17</sup> In the photo reproduction from the Doi private collection of the handcopied *Kuzōshishō* published by Kita, the Eight Realms are listed on the second page, making it appear as a sort of subtitle for the entire collection. In that listing, however, the last two realms are not Dynamic Connection and Great Awakening (機關, 大悟) but Dynamism (機) and Barrier Gate (關). The first verses begin immediately on the following page. See KITA 1991.

*jakugo* practice, the small number of verses alone is evidence that it cannot have been very detailed or developed.

*Zenrin kushū* 禪林句集 (*Zen Sangha Verse Collection*)

The *Zenrin kushū*, a much larger collection of Zen phrases, may be considered “the revised standard version” of Zen capping-phrase books. In 1688, approximately two hundred years after Tōyō Eichō first compiled the *Kuzōshi*, a scholar-monk who identified himself only as Ijūshi 已十子 created a greatly expanded Zen phrase collection consisting of approximately 4,380 verses (one cannot give a precise number because some verses occur twice, some couplets are simply the same as other couplets but in reverse order, some verses are simply slight 1-character variants of others, etc.). He annotated the text with sources and explanations of the meaning of many of the verses, and changed the title of the collection to *Zenrin kushū*.

The annotations and headnotes cite *kōan* cases from the *Hekigan-roku* and the *Mumonkan* where that particular verse is used as an *agyo*, a clear indication that the *Zenrin kushū* must have been used at the time in conjunction with *kōan* practice. Moreover, the large number of verses and the sheer volume of detailed information provided are evidence that the Rinzai *kōan* practice in the mid-1600s was organized into some sort of curriculum and that the appending of *jakugo* was part of that practice. Although a full three hundred years have elapsed since the time of Ijūshi, even now the *Zenrin kushū* is one of the main capping-phrase collections in use, further proof that it must have been designed from the outset as a handbook for *kōan* practice. If we are to hazard a guess as to when capping phrases became part of monastic *kōan* practice, the evidence points to sometime during the two hundred years between the publication of the *Kuzōshi* at the very end of the fifteenth century and the publication of Ijūshi’s *Zenrin kushū* in 1688.

Ijūshi himself attached a postscript alluding to the provenance of the work:

This collection of material from previous sources was compiled by Tōyō Eichō Zenji, seventh-generation descendant of Kanzan Kokushi, the founder of (Myōshin-ji temple in) Hanazono. Eichō made a worthy contribution to the (Zen) school and created an independent line. He may be considered a master of the profound truth, a teacher with the single eye in his forehead with which to illumine the world, raising high the single horn of the *ch’i-lin* and extending the claws and teeth of the lion. The circulation of this collection in the world has thus been received with great appreciation.

This material in its entirety comprises what those who study in the Zen forest learn first. It is like entering the Elementary Learning in Confucian study. Will not a thorough reading give one a ladder for viewing all texts? But if one tries to use it to compose literary works, one will often end up frustrated at not being able to find the original source of the verses contained in it.

I began by studying the Confucian classics, and in mid-life donned the black robes to seek instruction in the court of the Patriarchs. But the years have seen misfortune and the times have been unpropitious, and I have once again returned to Confucian studies. To repay my debt to the many fine Zen teachers from whom I received instruction, I have noted the sources (for the verses), and at the end have appended an additional 500 verses for a total of 6,000. I call it *The Zen Phrase Miscellany*. I have also made a separate collection in five fascicles that I call *Gold Chips from the Dense Forest arranged According to Rhyme*. Selected prose and poetry from numerous authors, outstanding phrases from all works of world-class repute, single verses and couplets used as common Zen sayings—all have been selected and compiled here for the benefit of later generations of students.

The *Zen Phrase Miscellany* mentioned above contains passages from Buddhist sutras, records of the Patriarchs, Taoist texts, Confucian canons, and the prose and poetry of numerous authors. Though I have noted their source, in most cases the verses here are from later texts. Where the original has been abbreviated and a later version cited, I have avoided variant characters. In the *Huai-nan tzu*, it says, “That there was a beginning implies there was also a time without any ‘there was a beginning.’” I have recklessly persisted in piling up additions the way this phrase does, and have not held my runaway tongue from expressing my own opinions. Even so, the arm does not bend outward. There are still five or six out of each hundred verses whose original source still remains unclear; I await a future scholar of great wisdom to supply them. Those whose pretence exceeds their knowledge will not escape punishment for their sins. But for students of Zen who study its many records, my work may not be lacking in usefulness.

1688 Feast Day of the New Year  
At Sengu Sanpu in Rakuhashi  
Respectfully,  
Ijūshi<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Some of Ijūshi’s expressions in this postscript merit comment. The single eye in the forehead is the Buddha’s eye of awakening that illumines the world, a well-known symbol for those familiar with the *Lotus Sutra*. The *ch’i-lin* is a fantastic animal with a single horn whose rare appearance was considered an omen of good fortune in Chinese mythology (see Glossary). Here the single horn is the symbolic equivalent of the single eye in the Buddha’s forehead. Both are metaphors for the great awakening of Zen. The claws and teeth of the lion are a metaphor for the fierce but compassionate techniques of the skillful Zen teacher (see Glossary). When Ijūshi says he first studied Confucianism and then in mid-life donned the “black robes,” he means he became a Buddhist monk. “The arm does not bend outward” (6.230) is a well-known Zen saying with many meanings, but here it simply means that there is a limit to how far one can push things. I wish to express my appreciation to Kōichi Shinohara and Burton Watson for help with the translation.

Ijūshi's postscript clearly identifies the two elements that kōan training brings together: the direct insight of awakening (the one eye in the forehead that illumines the world) and the literary study of texts. Although the literary study required of entrants to the Zen sangha is compared to the Elementary Learning in Confucian Studies, if the contents of the *Zenrin kushū* are any indication, there is nothing elementary about it. To read with Zen understanding the thousands of verses culled from hundreds of original sources must have required years, if not decades, of meditation and literary study. The formal, flowery humility of Ijūshi's language aside, one surmises that monastic training in his time must have been a rigorous undertaking.

Internal evidence seems to indicate that Ijūshi's *Zenrin kushū*, with 4,380 verses developed from Tōyō Eichō's 1200-verse *Kuzōshi*. Both texts are ordered according to number of characters as follows: 1-character, 2-character, 3-character, 4-character, 4-character couplets, 5-character, 5-character couplets, 6-character, 6-character couplets, 7-character, 7-character couplets, 8-character, and 8-character couplets. Within each section, however, the phrases are not ordered according to either character or reading. Despite the apparent randomness, there is a rough clustering according to topic. For example, in the ZRKS 4-character phrase section, phrases 70–83 deal with sin, guilt, law, and judgement; phrases 133–44 deal with thieves; phrases 286–9 all contain repeated characters; phrases 290–304 are about doing things twice unnecessarily; phrases 347–51 are about the perfect harmony of matching actions; and so on.

Almost all the verses of Tōyō Eichō's *Kuzōshi* reappear in the *Zenrin kushū*, and in much the same order. It is as if the verses of the *Kuzōshi* have been "spread out" so to speak, with additional verses inserted into the intervals. Compare, for example, the following stretches of verses.

*Kuzōshi*

- 452 兩肩擔不起  
*Ryōken ni ninai okosazu.*  
 Even with both shoulders,  
 you cannot lift it.
- 453 大地黑漫漫  
*Daichi koku manman.*  
 The great earth is utterly black.

*Zenrin kushū*

- 5.60 兩肩擔不起  
*Ryōken ni ninai okosazu.*  
 Even with both shoulders,  
 you cannot lift it.
- 5.61 大地載不起  
*Daichi mo nose okosazu.*  
 Not even the great earth can lift it up.
- 5.62 芙蓉滴秋露  
*Fukyo shūro shitataru.*  
 On lotus leaves autumn dew beads.
- 5.63 大地黑漫漫  
*Daichi koku manman.*  
 The great earth is utterly black.

- 454 突兀横古路  
*Tokkotsu to shite koro ni yokotau.*  
 It towers up high blocking the  
 ancient road.
- 455 虚空無背面  
*Kokū haimen nashi.*  
 Emptiness has no front or back.
- 456 通身無影像  
*Tsūshin yōzō nashi.*  
 The body entire has no shadow.
- 457 丹青畫不成  
*Tanzei egakedomo narazu.*  
 Color it red and blue,  
 still you have not painted it.
- 5.64 突兀横古路  
*Tokkotsu to shite koro ni yokotau.*  
 It towers up high blocking the  
 ancient road.
- 5.65 僧堂入佛殿  
*Sōdō butsuden ni iru.*  
 The Monks' Hall enters the Buddha Hall.
- 5.66 横身當宇宙  
*Mi o yokotawatte uchū ni ataru.*  
 He throws himself into the universe.
- 5.67 團圓無少剩  
*Danran shōjō nashi.*  
 Perfect, and not a bit more.
- 5.68 通身無影像  
*Tsūshin yōzō nashi.*  
 The body entire has no shadow.
- 5.69 丹青畫不成  
*Tanzei egakedomo narazu.*  
 Color it red and blue,  
 still you have not painted it.
- 5.70 好手畫不成  
*Kōshu egakedomo narazu.*  
 Not even an expert can paint it.

All the verses from *Kuzōshi* 452–7 reappear in the *Zenrin kushū* and in the same order with the exception of verse 455. Verse 455 has been dropped, but probably only because a similar phrase appears as 5.96 in a later section in the *Zenrin kushū* (5.96: 光明無背面, *Kōmyō haimen nashi*, “The brilliant light has no back or front”).

For want of a better explanation of the relationship of the *Kuzōshi* to the *Zenrin kushū*, one may suppose that the original *Kuzōshi* grew into the *Zenrin kushū* as the original text was hand-copied from one generation to the next. Users may have added marginal notes or paper inserts with further useful Zen phrases. If someone had learned a new phrase on the theme of thieves, for instance, he would have made a note of this in the margin next to another phrase on the topic. When this text and all its notes were transcribed, the copyist would incorporate the phrases noted in the margins of the old text directly into the body of the new copy. In this way the original verses of the *Kuzōshi* would retain their original order but become separated as

more and more verses were inserted between them; and at the same time rough clusterings of phrases around specific topics would naturally make their way into the text.

Ijūshi's postscript raises several problems. The *Zenrin kushū* we possess today has approximately 4,380 phrases and verses, but Ijūshi claims that his collection has 6,000. Besides this text, which Ijūshi calls a *Zen Verse Miscellany* (*Zenrin zakku* 禪林雜句), he speaks of having compiled another text called *Gold Chips from the Dense Forest* (*Banrin kinsetsu-shū* 萬林金屑集). It may be that the two texts together contained 6,000 phrases, but Ijūshi's wording does not suggest this. Moreover, it has usually been assumed that Ijūshi increased the number of phrases from the 1,219 in the *Kuzōshi* to 4,380 in the *Zenrin kushū*, but he himself says that he added only another 500.

A further problem is that several sections have an appendix of supplementary phrases 外句增續 that presumably were added by Ijūshi. These supplementary phrases, which total 318 phrases,<sup>19</sup> are arranged according to the rhyme class of their last character, as we saw in the Chinese poetry composition handbooks. It makes more sense to suppose that through two centuries of successive copying along the lines just described, the *Kuzōshi* grew to about 3,700 or 3,800 phrases, and that when Ijūshi edited it, he merely added the supplementary phrases. Even so, the numbers do not quite add up and further investigation is called for.

The present edition of the *Zenrin kushū* lists more than two hundred titles of original sources from which the phrases were taken. These include Confucian writings, texts of philosophical Taoism, the Chinese histories, the *I Ching*, the Chinese poets, Buddhist sūtras, records of the Zen patriarchs, and large quantities of T'ang period poetry. The list of sources extends over all areas of the vast corpus of Chinese literature up through the T'ang period in China (618–960 CE). Although the actual compilation was made in Japan, all the phrases are Chinese and the recurring images in these phrases are all characteristic of Chinese culture at the time of the T'ang: the great vast waterways of China all flowing east, narrow gorges where monkeys shriek like people crying, plaintive barbarian flutes, cruel desert frontiers, luscious lands to the south, women pounding silk at night on fulling blocks, the red dust of the imperial cities, life decided at the point of an official's finger, and so on. This means that the *jakugo* practice required Japanese monks to express their experience of Zen awakening, grounded in the immediacy of the moment, by means of images from a foreign culture and an ever more distant past.

The *Zenrin kushū* that is consulted by present-day monks in training exists in several versions. For the practicing Zen monk, a pocket-size Meiji 27 (1894) reprint is available from Baiyō Shoin. For academic study, the Zen Bunka Kenkyūjo (Research Institute

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<sup>19</sup> The numbers are as follows: 40 in the 4-character phrases, 44 in the 5-character phrases, 67 in the 10-character phrases, 30 in the 7-character phrases, 54 in the 14-character phrases, 31 in the 8-character phrases, 10 in the 16-character phrases.



for Zen Culture) at Hanazono University has published a Meiji 19 (1886) reprint with a character index. Numerous other Zen phrase collections were made in the centuries after Ijūshi, but his *Zenrin kushū* has been considered the authoritative edition and continues to be reprinted regularly. From time to time secondhand bookstores still turn up copies of old hand-bound woodblock-print editions whose pages are made of thin mulberry paper folded in half.

Despite its large number of verses, the *Zenrin kushū* has one major failing that makes it impossible for monks to rely on it exclusively. The work was published in 1688. Hakuin Ekaku Zenji was born in 1686 and went on to reform the Rinzaï kōan practice, organizing it into the “kōan system” more or less as we know it today. It is unclear just what this reform consisted of and who was responsible for it.<sup>20</sup> But it is now widely accepted that Hakuin revised the kōan system, with the result that Rinzaï monasteries everywhere now teach *Hakuin no kenge* (見解), the kōan responses accepted by Hakuin. The *kenge* in turn determine which verses will be accepted as *jakugo* for any given kōan. The *Zenrin kushū*, published before Hakuin’s reforms, does not therefore necessarily reflect the kōan answers recognized in Hakuin Zen. This is the reason that new collections of *jakugo* have become necessary.

#### TWENTIETH-CENTURY CAPPING-PHRASE COLLECTIONS

Three Zen phrase books compiled in the twentieth century are also consulted by Zen monks in the practice of *jakugo*:

*Zudokko kushū* 塗毒鼓句集 (*Poison-Painted Drum Phrase Collection*), contained in *Zudokko* (*Poison-Painted Drum*), a two-volume Zen monk’s handbook compiled by Fujita Genro 藤田玄路 (Kyoto: Kennin-ji Sōdō, 1922);

*Shinsan zengoshū* 新纂禪語集 (*A New Compilation of the Zen Phrase Collection*), compiled by Tsuchiya Etsudō under the direction of Unkankutsu Taibi Rōshi 雲關窟釋大眉老師 (Kyoto: Kichūdō, 1973);

*Kunchū zenrin kushū* 訓註禪林句集 (*Annotated Zen Sangha Verse Collection*), edited and revised by Shibayama Zenkei 柴山全慶 Rōshi (Kyoto: Kichūdō, 1972).

#### *Zudokko kushū* 塗毒鼓句集 (*Poison-Painted Drum Phrase Collection*)

The *Zudokko* (*Poison-Painted Drum*) is a two-volume Zen monk’s handbook compiled by Fujita Genro (1880–1935), a layman who trained under Takeda Mokurai Rōshi 竹田默雷老師 of the Kennin-ji monastery in Kyoto. Though small in format, the *Zudokko* is an invaluable resource containing nearly all the documents necessary for

<sup>20</sup> See MOHR 1999.

Rinzai practice: all the major kōan collections including the *Hekigan-roku*, the *Mumonkan*, the *Kattō-shū* 葛藤集 (*Tangled Vine Collection*), and the *Chin'u-shū* 鳩羽集 (*Collection of Poison Wings*); the entire *kanji* text of the *Rinzai-roku* and the *Kidō Daibetsugo* 虛堂代別語 (*The Alternate Phrases of Kidō Oshō*, an advanced kōan text); excerpts from the records of the Zen Patriarchs and from Hakuin's writings; and many other Zen documents. The title, *Poison-Painted Drum*, indicates the effects on learners of these Zen teachings. The skin of the drum of Zen is painted with a virulent poison taken from the wing of the poison blackbird; when the drum is beaten, all who hear it die. The *Zudokko* was originally published by the Kennin-ji *sōdō* (monastery). Fujita's Afterword to the second volume of the work is dated Taishō 11 (1922), which we may consider its year of publication.

Fujita Genro was born Fujita Tokujirō 藤田徳次郎 in 1880 in Naniwa, Osaka Prefecture, and at an early age developed a strong interest in Buddhism. After graduating from high school, he made his way to Kyoto, where in 1900 he came into contact with Takeda Mokurai. He left Japan in 1905 to study at New York University as a foreign student and returned to Japan in 1908 (ZGDJT 1073c, OBATA 1938, 624–6). He belonged to a prosperous business family, which to this day is active in commerce and the arts. His layman's name, Genro, was conferred by Takeda Mokurai Rōshi. It seems to have been taken from the line in the *Nandō Benken Jūmon* 南堂辨驗十門 (*Nandō's Ten Examination Gates*): “You must go by the dark path (*genro*) of the flying bird,” *Subekaraku chōdō no genro o yukubeshi* 須行鳥道玄路 (in the second volume of *Zudokko*). The dark path is the path of one who leaves no traces, just as a bird leaves no traces in its path of flight. The “afterwords” he composed for each of the two volumes of the *Zudokko* are written in lines of 4-character verse in the so-called “horse hoof style” (*bateikei* 馬蹄型, because a galloping horse leaves hoofprints in series of four), probably in deliberate imitation of the style of the opening preface of the *Rinzai-roku*. They make frequent allusion to the Chinese classics and display the self-effacing, ironic style of Zen writing. They make it clear that Genro had progressed to a rather advanced stage of kōan practice and that he was a serious amateur scholar of the Chinese classics.

At the end of the second volume of the *Zudokko* is a section simply entitled *Kushū*, “Phrase Collection.” It contains 2,397 phrases categorized according to number of characters. Only the characters are printed. No *kundoku* symbols are added between the lines and no readings are given. There is no commentary explaining the meaning and no sources are indicated. As Takeda Mokurai remarks in his foreword to the second volume:

Companion on the way, layman Genro is the author of the *Poison-Painted Drum*. He has swept up the many poisons of our school and flung them in our faces. He gives no reading for any character; he gives no annotation for any phrase. He does this out of the goodness of his grandmotherly heart.

Some Zen priests argue that this makes the *Zudokko kushū* the best text to use in searching for *jakugo*, since one can read the bare *kanji* without the interference of margin symbols and annotation. For precisely this reason practitioners find it difficult to use. For example, the lay practitioner Tsuchiya Etsudō complained that in the more than 250 years since Tōyō Eichō's *Zenrin kushū* was published (the mistaken attribution of the *Zenrin kushū* to Tōyō Eichō is typical), there had been no new Zen phrase book suitable for looking up *jakugo* except the *Zudokko kushū*, and even this collection was not perfect:

The *Zudokko kushū* is the only text to address this situation, but it has no margin symbols to indicate the order for reading characters and no *kana* to indicate verb endings. We beginners cannot help but feel hampered in our ability to use it freely. Not only that, one cannot really say that it is a complete collection. It may be considered handy, but that does not mean that it is not inconvenient. For us lay practitioners, it would be desirable to have a single book to serve all our needs. (TSUCHIYA 1973, 2)

Tsuchiya must not have known of the *Wakun ryakkai zenrin kushū* 和訓略解禪林句集 (*The Zenrin kushū with Japanese Readings and Concise Annotation*) compiled by Yamamoto Shungaku that appeared in 1920, two years before the *Zudokko kushū*. This text takes Ijūshi's *Zenrin kushū* as its basic text, appends the full reading in *kana* to each phrase, and adds a short annotation. Since it also claimed to contain 6,000 verses (a claim apparently based on Ijūshi's postscript), this edition should have gone a long way to meet Tsuchiya's complaint that the *Zudokko kushū* lacked sufficient phrases and verses to be complete. Apparently ignorant of Yamamoto's text, Tsuchiya's solution was to produce his own Zen phrase book, the *Zengoshū*.

### *Zengoshū* 禪語集 (*Zen Phrase Collection*)

Tsuchiya Etsudō compiled the *Shinsan zengoshū* 新纂禪語集 (*A New Compilation of the Zen Phrase Collection*) under the direction of Unkankutsu Taibi Rōshi 雲關窟釋大眉老師 (TSUCHIYA 1973). This collection contains 3,040 verses, categorized by number of characters in each verse. Within each category, the verses or phrases are arranged according to the Japanese reading, not according to the Chinese character. That is, they are arranged in a-i-u-e-o order according to the *yomikudashi* reading, not according to the *on-yomi* reading of the first character of each phrase. Although the full *yomikudashi* reading is not given, the usual *kundoku* margin symbols indicate the order for reading the characters. There are no explanatory notes and no citation of sources.

Tsuchiya Etsudō (1899–1978) was born Tsuchiya Kiichi 土屋喜一 in Tochigi Prefecture. He was a mathematics teacher and during his teaching career had been principal of several local schools in the prefecture. He probably first came into contact with

Zen while teaching in the town of Nasu in Tochigi Prefecture, where one of the senior teachers at the same school was a teaching disciple of the well-known Zen monk Nantenbō. About the beginning of Shōwa (late 1920s), Tsuchiya moved to the city of Ashikaga to teach at the Ashikaga Prefectural Middle School (Ashikaga Kenritsu Chūgakkō) and joined the Ashikaga Zendōkai 足利禅堂会, where he became a disciple of its teacher Unkankutsu Shaku Taibi Rōshi (1889–1970), a dharma successor to the well-known Meiji-period rōshi, Shaku Sōen (1859–1919). According to the *Unkan Kōroku nenpyō* (chronology), Tsuchiya received the *kojigō*, or layman's name, of Etsudō during a *sesshin* with Taibi Rōshi in November of 1930 (DAICHŪ-JI 1966, 930).

Although he passed on his teaching responsibilities to other people toward the end of his life, Taibi Rōshi formally led the Suigetsu Dōjō from 1925 until his death in 1970, that is, for the remarkable period of forty-five years. Since Tsuchiya Etsudō formally became a disciple to Taibi Rōshi in 1930, their master-student relationship lasted for more than forty years. During this time Tsuchiya Etsudō was able to compile a Zen phrase book that would correct what he considered the two faults of the *Zudokko kushū*—the lack of margin symbols and *kana* to indicate how the phrases were to be turned into Japanese, and the limitation of 2,397 phrases, a number insufficient for the *jakugo* practice he was engaged in with Taibi Rōshi. According to anecdotal evidence from Asano Genjū 朝野元重, the present leader of the Ashikaga Zendōkai, Tsuchiya Etsudō combed the Chinese classical literature for phrases and verses suitable for use as *jakugo*. These he would take to Taibi Rōshi, who would either approve or disapprove. Over a period of many years, Tsuchiya kept adding to his collection of phrases and verses. The final version of his *Zengoshū* contains 3,040 phrases, or nearly a twenty-five percent increase over the 2,397 phrases of the *Zudokko kushū*.<sup>21</sup> It is the largest of the three *jakugo* phrase books compiled in the twentieth century.

*Kunchū zenrin kushū* 訓註禅林句集 (*Annotated Zen Sangha Verse Collection*)

The *Kunchū zenrin kushū* of Shibayama Zenkei Rōshi contains 2,646 phrases and verses, arranged according to number of characters and further subdivided according to the *on*-reading of the first Chinese character of the phrase (and not according to the Japanese reading, as is the case in the *Zengoshū*). In addition, each phrase or verse is accompanied by a full reading in *kana* and a short annotation or explanation. In many cases a source is cited. There is also a section following the verses listing all the chief abbots of Daitoku-ji through 490 generations.

This particular text is easily the most usable of the several *jakugo* texts, but it is also

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<sup>21</sup> I wish to express my appreciation to Tsuchiya Shiomitsu and Kurihara Morito for providing information about their grandfather, Tsuchiya Etsudō; and to Asano Genjū and Asano Teruo for information about the Ashikaga Zendōkai, of which they are the present leaders.

the one that attracts the most criticism. Some complain that the Shibayama collection encourages monks to read the explanations and not the original phrases themselves. Others are annoyed at the way the explanations tend to rely on stereotyped intellectual phrases that are irritating to the practitioner who is seeking words to capture a living experience. Some monasteries even actively discourage their monks from using this text for these reasons.

Shibayama Zenkei Rōshi (1894–1974) began his long career in Buddhism when, under the influence of his devout mother, he entered a Buddhist temple at age fourteen. As he grew older, he grew critical of the Buddhist institution in Japan and for a while left Buddhism for Christianity. He also studied Esperanto and became one of the best Esperanto speakers in Japan at that time. Still on the spiritual search, he heard an inspiring lecture from a Zen rōshi that made him decide to enter a Zen monastery in 1916. After many years of monastery training at Nanzen-ji, he taught as a professor at Hanazono and Ōtani Universities in Kyoto. He was invited back to the Nanzen-ji monastery as its rōshi in 1948 and was elected *kanchō*, or chief abbot, of the entire Nanzen-ji line in 1959. Shibayama Rōshi became known to the West when in 1965 he made the first of several visits to the United States giving special lectures and teaching *zazen* at selected universities (KUDŌ 1975). His best-known book in English is *Zen Comments on the Mumonkan* (SHIBAYAMA 1974).

Among his many books in Japanese, his revised version of the *Zenrin kushū* is among the standard handbooks that Japanese Rinzai monks consult when assigned *jakugo*. The first edition of his *Zenrin kushū* appeared in 1952, and although probably intended for monks doing *kōan* practice, it also became popular with people practicing tea ceremony and calligraphy. Consequently Shibayama produced a second, revised, edition in 1972, increasing the number of phrases by 300 and simplifying the ordering system. He mentions in the preface to the second edition that he was greatly assisted by Fukushima Genshō 福島元照, one of his senior monks. Fukushima, now Fukushima Keidō Rōshi, the head of the Tōfuku-ji monastery in Kyoto, states that the number of verses was increased for two reasons: to include phrases and verses often found on tea scrolls, and to include all the *jakugo* used in the Takujū lineage.<sup>22</sup>

The above three Zen phrase books, meant for *jakugo* practice, have all been compiled in the twentieth century. It is inevitable that new *jakugo* collections would appear for at least two reasons. First, there is gradual change. Zen masters in every generation add a new phrase or two and drop an old phrase or two from the corpus of phrases from which they draw *jakugo*. Thus the *Zenrin kushū* by Ijūshi, which may have been appropriate for the Rinzai *kōan* system at the end of the 1600s, is no longer adequate for the Rinzai *kōan* system in the twenty-first century. In addition to such gradual

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<sup>22</sup> Conversation 8 July 1998, at Tōfuku-ji Sōdō.

change, there is also radical systematic change. Hakuin is said to have revised the entire traditional kōan practice and forged it into the present system. The new systematized kōan responses that Hakuin accepted as correct must surely have caused all teaching rōshi to revise their lists of correct *jakugo*. There is also a third factor, which we are in no position to judge at present. The Hakuin lineage is divided into two sublineages, the Inzan and the Takujū. Though they both teach the Zen of Hakuin, they have developed slightly different sets of responses for their kōan, and consequently slightly different sets of *jakugo*.

#### ADAPTATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS OF ZEN PHRASE BOOKS

Throughout the Edo period, Zen phrase books continued to appear, but most were reprints of Ijūshi's *Zenrin kushū*, or were modifications of it. Sōtō Sect Zen monks made similar Zen phrase books; the *Zenrin meiku jiten* 禪林名句辭典 compiled by Iida Rigyō is a modern-day Sōtō Sect Zen phrase book (IIDA 1975). There was also, apparently, a Jōdo-shū (Pure Land Buddhist) *Kuzōshi* (SANAÉ 1996, 593).

Twentieth-century Japan has seen the publication of numerous popular books listing and explaining Buddhist verses and phrases (MATSUBARA 1972, NAKAMURA 1977, KINŌ 1988). Some specialize in particularly Zen language (AKIZUKI 1981, HIRATA 1988). Others single out Buddhist phrases, many from Zen, that have entered into colloquial Japanese (IWAMOTO 1972, HIRO 1988). Introductory books on Zen occasionally include a short section explaining Zen verses and phrases (TAKAHASHI 1988). Moreover, since scrolls with Zen verses are so important for tea ceremony, several books aimed specifically at this reading audience have appeared, often providing detailed information and interesting background to Zen verses. The *Zengokushō* 禪語句抄 (*Annotated Zen Phrases*, Hekian Shūdō 1982) is a useful handbook of Zen verses that indexes both the top and bottom verses of every couplet. NISHIBE Bunjō's *Zengo no ajiwaikata* 禪語の味わい方 (*How to Savor Zen Phrases*, 1985) and the four-volume series *Ichigyōmono* 一行物 (*Scrolls in Single Lines*) by the respected scholar of medieval Japanese Buddhism, HAGA Kōshiro (1973, 1974, 1977, 1984), not only lists Zen phrases but also contains short explanatory lectures.

The Chinese Buddhist publishing industry has likewise produced a number of collections of Zen phrases. Although I have not been able to keep up to date with Chinese publications in this area, I would single out as an interesting example of reverse cultural flow, the *Ch'an-lin hui-yü* 禪林慧語 (*Zen Sangha Words of Wisdom*) edited by Ling Yun, under the supervision of Bai Mu.<sup>23</sup> Compiled by Chinese authors and published in Taiwan, it is partly based on Japanese Zen phrase books and gives among its

<sup>23</sup> See LING Yün, n.d.

sources Gidō Shūshin's *Jōwashū*, Hakuin's *Kaian kokugo*, Dōgen's *Shōbō genzō* and *Eihei kōroku*, and the *Collected Poems of Natsume Sōseki*.

In English, several translations of selected verses from the *Zenrin kushū* have been published over the years. The earliest attempt seems to have been by D. T. Suzuki, whose numerous translations of Zen verses are scattered throughout his voluminous corpus. R. H. Blyth in *Haiku 1: Eastern Culture* gives translations of 73 verses in a section devoted solely to the *Zenrin kushū* and translates several other verses throughout the rest of his book (BLYTH 1949, 23–33 and passim). *Cat's Yawn*, the short-lived (July 1940–July 1941) monthly publication of the First Zen Institute of America under the direction of Sasaki Sōkei-an, had a regular feature called “Zenrin Collection,” which gave the romanized reading of a Zen verse, its English translation, and the context from which the verse was taken (FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA 1947).

Sōkei-an died in 1945 but his work was continued by his wife, Ruth Fuller Sasaki, who went on to establish the First Zen Institute of America in Japan, a research institute and Zen practice center, at Daitoku-ji in Kyoto. In March 1956 she published a short selection of poems from the *Zenrin kushū* in an article, “Anthology of Zen Poems,” which appeared in the Japanese journal *Zen bunka* 4: 22–6. She then collaborated with Isshū Miura Rōshi to produce *Zen Dust*, which includes a translation of 210 Zen verses with original *kanji*, romanized readings, English translations, and occasional notes (MIURA and SASAKI 1966, 79–122). Among the many research projects she left behind at the time of her death in 1967, was a plan for a full translation of the *Zenrin kushū* that she and her research associates had been working on. The library of the First Zen Institute of America in Japan, housed at Ryōsen-an in Daitoku-ji, contains a stack of notebooks related to the project. Daitoku-ji kindly allowed me to view these notebooks. I discovered that while there were polished translations for a few of the *Kushū* phrases, the translations of most of the phrases were in various stages of revision, and a large number had not been started at all.

In 1981 Shigematsu Sōiku published *A Zen Forest*, an English translation of 1,234 verses with *kanji*. Although this remains the longest version of the Zen phrase book in English, it is interesting primarily as a sampling of Zen phrases and verses; it does not contain enough phrases and verses to serve as a handbook for *jakugo* practice. Robert E. Lewis, who is associated with the New York Zendō, Shōbō-ji, published in 1996 *The Book of the Zen Grove* (2nd edition), a translation of 631 verses based on the Japanese Shibayama *Zenrin kushū*, with romanized readings, commentary, indices, and a bibliography. In 1991 the Pure Land scholar Hisao Inagaki published *A Glossary of Zen Terms*, a dictionary of 5,500 terms with *kanji* and explanation, focused mainly on 2-character and 4-character *kanji* compounds and set phrases. Although many longer phrases are included and its content overlaps with the 1-character to 4-character phrases of the standard Zen phrase books, the work is not suitable for use as a capping-phrase handbook.

## ZEN SAND

This book, *Zen Sand*, combines and translates the contents of the two most widely used twentieth-century Japanese Zen kōan capping-phrase books, Shibayama Zenkei's *Zenrin kushū* and Tsuchiya Etsudō's *Shinsan zengoshū*, providing the original Chinese characters, the classical Japanese reading, and an English translation for 4,022 phrases. It is the largest modern collection of Zen capping phrases in any language, surpassing by far Shibayama's *Zenrin kushū* (2,646 phrases) and Tsuchiya's *Shinsan zengoshū* (3,040 phrases), and second only in size to Ijūshi's *Zenrin kushū* of 1688, which contained approximately 4,380 phrases. In addition to the basic characters, the readings, and the translations, *Zen Sand* also provides a detailed Glossary of supplementary information.

The publication of *Zen Sand* serves two communities: practitioners and scholars. For practitioners, Westerners who have wanted to do the full Rinzai Zen kōan practice have been prevented by the fact that there was no clear account of the overall Zen kōan curriculum with its important literary element, that none of the Western teachers of Zen had ever completed the kōan capping-phrase practice, and that there was no Western-language version of the common capping-phrase books that every Rinzai Zen monk possesses. The publication of *Zen Sand* for the first time makes it possible for Westerners to carry on the traditional capping-phrase practice in either the Inzan or Takujū lineage.

For scholars, *Zen Sand* argues that the rise of the kōan can only be understood against the background of Chinese literary culture, that characteristic features of the kōan dialogue (competition, deceptiveness, on-the-spot spontaneity, turning the tables, and, especially, mind-to-mind transmission) were inherited from its ancestor the Chinese literary game, and then put to work in the service of an awakening "not founded on words and letters." In addition, with its explanation of the kōan system and the capping-phrase practice, *Zen Sand* makes it quite clear that Zen is *free in* language, not *free from* language.

According to the widely accepted stereotypical image, Zen completely rejects language and conceptual thought. Zen enlightenment, it is believed, breaks through the false dichotomies imposed by language and destroys the artificial categories implanted in our minds by social conditioning. Zen enlightenment, it is assumed, directly apprehends things as they are in an ineffable pure consciousness outside the realms of language and intellect. This stereotype, with its crude dichotomy between a realm of intellectual thought and a realm of pure intuition, topples on close inspection from its own internal inconsistencies.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> For a detailed argument on this point, see HORI 2000.



But as *Zen Sand* makes clear, the kōan practice is not a breaking out of language into a realm of silence but a sophisticated use of language to express and realize awakening. The study of the capping-phrase practice makes explicitly clear that Zen seeks not freedom from language by rejecting it, but freedom in language by mastering it.

# 6

## Guide to Conventions and Abbreviations

THE PURPOSE OF THIS final chapter is to provide the reader with the technical apparatus needed to identify the various conventions and abbreviations used in the course of this book.

### SOURCES AND ORDERING OF THE VERSES

*Zen Sand* (ZS) combines the entire contents of Shibayama Zenkei's *Zenrin kushū* (Shiba) and Tsuchiya Etsudō's *Shinsan zengoshū* (ZGS), the two capping-phrase books most frequently used by Rinzai Zen monks.

In general, ZS follows the same order of phrases as ZGS, namely, the Japanese *kana* order (a-i-u-e-o) based on the first syllable of the Japanese reading. This can be seen from the consecutive progression of ZGS numbers in the reference line. Phrases from the Shibayama *Zenrin kushū* were inserted into this order in their appropriate places. This a-i-u-e-o order is broken, however, in the cases of connected verses, as in the example shown below. Where two or more verses are drawn originally from the same longer poem, ZS places them together in order to reconstruct the original verse. The second and third verses in such a series will consequently not be in a-i-u-e-o order.

Other ordering systems would also have been possible. For example, the phrases could have been ordered according to radical and stroke count of the first Chinese character of each verse (the order in the Shibayama text). The ZGS system based on the Japanese reading was followed because it could be used to order the verses either in Japanese or in English romanization.

### GUIDE TO THE VERSES

The verses in this book are laid out in a uniform pattern, with standard component parts. The diagram of sample verses below illustrates and explains those component parts.



sometimes read *ryū*. 走る “to run” is pronounced *hashiru* in some Zen phrases, *washiru* in others. The “Zen” reading of Chinese words and phrases sometimes differs considerably from what is now considered standard reading. 下語 “capping phrase” is read *agyo*, not *gego*; 業風 “wind of karma” is read *goppū*, not *gyōfū*; 江湖 “river and lake” is read *gōko*, no *kōgo*; 法堂 “dharma lecture hall” is read *hattō*, not *hōdō*; 經行 “walking” (between meditation periods) is *kinhin*, not *kyōgyō*; and so on. Different Zen sources will sometimes offer different versions of the correct Zen reading. 少売弄 “petty salesmanship” is read *shōmairō* by ZGDJT 586b and *shanbeirō* by Shibano 41.

The Chinese verses and phrases are often ambiguous, allowing more than one interpretation. ZS follows the Japanese interpretation of the verse or phrase, as indicated by the Japanese reading. This may be somewhat different from an interpretation based directly on the Chinese. Phrase 4.500, for example, reads:

詠花吟月      *Hana ni eiji tsuki ni ginzu.*

I sing to the flowers, I chant to the moon.

This could be read, “I sing *of* flowers, I chant *of* the moon,” but the traditional Japanese reading is *Hana ni eiji tsuki ni ginzu*, “I sing *to* the flowers, I chant *to* the moon.”

Or again, phrase 6.142 reads:

巢知風穴知雨      *Sukuu mono wa kaze o shiri, kessuru mono wa ame o shiru.*

Those who live in nests know the wind;  
those who live in holes know the rain.

This can be translated, “Nests know the wind, holes know the rain” but the traditional Japanese reading makes clear 巢 and 穴 are taken not as simply “nests” and “holes” but as persons: *sukuu mono* “those who live in nests” and *kessuru mono* “those who live in holes.”

The Zen teachers who were consulted have pointed out that the preferred reading of a particular phrase expresses its *kyōgai*, the spirit, the tone in which the phrase is meant to be uttered. In English, “Am not misbehaving” is too formal and descriptive, but “ain’t misbehavin’” actually expresses (a “misbehavin’”) attitude. That is its *kyōgai*. Verse 14.533 reads:

睡美不知山雨過      *Nemuri bi ni shite shirazu san’u no suguru koto o,*  
覺來殿閣自生涼      *Samekitatte denkaku onozukara shōryō.*

My nap was wonderful, I wasn’t aware mountain rains had passed,  
When I awoke, the pavilion itself was so clean and fresh!

Usually the verb in the second line would be read *shōryō su*. But to insert *su* makes the line descriptive (“It is clean and fresh”) when what is wanted is an expressive “So clean and fresh!”

Or again, verse 14.479 reads:

鐵鞋無底飽風霜 *Tetsuai soko nōshite fūsō ni aku,*  
 歲晚歸來臥石床 *Saiban kaerikitatte sekijō ni fusu.*  
 My iron sandals are worn right through,  
 I've had my fill of wind and frost,  
 At the end of my years, I've come home to lie  
 on my bed of stone.

The usual reading *Tetsuai soko naku shite*, “My iron sandals have no soles,” is too formal. Here, for the sake of *kyōgai*, *naku shite* has been contracted to *nōshite*, a much more colloquial reading. These are the words of a person at the end of a long career. *Naku shite* merely describes his weariness, *nōshite* attempts to express it.

- ④ *Glossary entry.* Raised corner brackets 「」 indicate that the enclosed term is listed in the Glossary that follows the verses.
- ⑤ *English translation.* Some of the phrases are from previously translated works such as the Confucian *Analects*, the *Tao-te ching*, the *Shih-chi*, and Chinese poetry. Where there already existed a good English translation, I have often quoted that translation, but for the vast majority of phrases in ZS, the English translations are my own.
- ⑥ *Annotation.* Several types of information are provided on the annotation line. The annotation line indicates where a particular phrase appears in one of the two major kōan collections, the *Hekigan-roku (Heki)* and the *Mumonkan (MMK)*. It also presents alternate readings, background information, and reference to items in the Glossary. In some cases, where the phrase is well established, for instance, the Confucian *Analects*, it indicates the source. ZS does not attempt, however, to identify an original source for every verse or phrase. To do so would have meant first establishing a correct Chinese character text for each phrase, already a difficult task for many entries, and then tracking that verse or phrase back through many historical layers of documents. ZS leaves the great philological task of establishing the original source for its more than 4,000 phrases to another generation of scholars.
- ⑦ *Reference.* Limitations of space preclude any detailed explanation of the interpretation. For those wishing further information, the reference line includes the ZGS phrase number and the Shibayama page number, as well as reference to other Zen phrase books, dictionaries, and standard indexes.
- ⑧ *Linked verses.* The arrow pointing right ➤ at the end of the English translation indicates that the following number is a continuation of the same verse. It is always followed in the succeeding verse by another arrow pointing left ◀. Sometimes there can be several verses linked together in this manner.

## ROMANIZATION AND PRONUNCIATION

Romanization of Japanese words follows the standard Hepburn system. The romanization of Chinese follows the Wade-Giles system.

The Rinzaï capping-phrase practice is, to the best of my knowledge, carried on only in Japan. The *Zengoshū* and the Shibayama *Zenrin kushū* were compiled in Japan, even though their contents are all written in Chinese. Since this book is for those working in the Japanese tradition, the following conventions have been followed throughout:

1. Names of Zen monks and Zen personalities important to Rinzaï kōan practice have been given in their Japanese pronunciation instead of in the Chinese pronunciations, e.g., Rinzaï, Mumon, Jōshū, Setchō rather than Lin-chi, Wu-men, Chao-chou, Hsüeh-tou.  
Titles of kōan texts have been given in Japanese, e.g., *Hekigan-roku*, *Mumonkan* rather than *Pi-yen-lu*, *Wu-men-kuan*.
2. Names of Zen monks important primarily to Zen scholarship have been given in their Chinese pronunciation, e.g., Fen-yang Shan-chao.
3. Names of other Chinese persons and places have been given in Chinese pronunciation rather than in Japanese. Thus, for example, Yang Kuei-fei is used rather than Yōkihi, T'ao Yüan-ming rather than Tōenmei, Chuang-tzu rather than Sōshi, Ch'ang-an rather than Chōan.
4. With the exception of Kuan-yin (Ch.), the names of buddhas and bodhi-sattvas are given in Sanskrit, e.g., Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra. Some other terms, like *yakṣa*, *asamkhyeya*, and *kalpa*, are also given in Sanskrit.

Diacritical marks have been omitted from Sanskrit words that have entered into standard English (for example, nirvana, sutra, and karma), but are retained in the titles of Sanskrit works.

## ABBREVIATIONS

A number of classical sources are cited in *Zen Sand* by title only. For further bibliographical information, consult the list at the end of the Bibliography on page 731.

- Agyo* *Agyo* is an interlinear capping phrase, which may be inserted into either the Case or the Verse of the *Hekigan-roku*.
- Empuku-ji A reading given by Katō Gessō Rōshi of the Empuku-ji Sōdō in Yawata-shi, Kyōto-fu.
- GKFGS 1.60 *Shinpen gōko fūgetsu-shū sakkūshō kōgi* 新編江湖風月集鑿空抄講義 [Pointless Lectures on the *Fūgetsu-shū*, New Edition] by Suzuki

- Shijun 鈴木子順 (Tokyo: Reisen-in, 1935), Part 1, page 60. The two parts have separately numbered pages.
- Heki* 20 Case 20 of the *Hekigan-roku* 碧巖錄 [Blue Cliff Record]. The full title is *Bukka Engo Zenji hekigan-roku* (Ch. *Fo-kuo Yüan-wu Ch'an-shih Pi-yen lu*) 佛果園悟禪師碧巖錄 [Blue Cliff Record of Zen Master Engo] [T 48: 139–225].
- Heki* 96 Verse  
1st Comm. *Hekigan-roku* Case 96, 1st Commentary to the Verse.
- HYDCD 5.124 Vol. v, page 124 of Luo Zhu-feng, ed. 羅竹風主編, *Hanyu dacidian* 漢語大詞典 [Lexicon of Chinese, 12 vols. and Index] (Hanyu Dacidian Chubanshe, 1990).
- KSMKJT §374 Entry number 374 of *Kanshi meiku jiten* 漢詩名句辭典 [Dictionary of Well-known Verses from Chinese Poetry], edited by Kamata Tadashi 鎌田正 and Yoneyama Toratarō 米山寅太郎 (Tokyo: Daishūkan, 1980).
- KZS #211 Phrase number 211 of the *Kuzōshi* according to the text established in Yamada Toshio 山田俊雄, Iriya Yoshitaka 入矢義高, and Sanae Kensei 早苗憲生, eds., *Teikun Ōrai kuzōshi* 庭訓往來句雙紙 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996).
- MMK 20 Case 20 of the *Zenshū mumonkan* 禪宗無門關 (Ch. *Ch'an-tsung Wu-men-kuan*) [The Gateless Barrier of the Zen School] compiled by Mumon Ekai 無門慧開 (Ch. Wu-men Hui-k'ai), edited by Shūshō 宗紹 (Ch. Tsung-shao), and published in 1229 [T 48: 292–9].
- Morohashi 23345.43 Character number 23345, compound number 43 in *Dai kanwa jiten* 大漢和辭典 [Great Chinese-Japanese Dictionary] compiled by Morohashi Tetsuji 諸橋轍次 (Tokyo: Daishūkan Shoten, 1960).
- MZZ 134.331 Vol. 134, page 331 of the *Manji zokuzōkyō*. 卍續藏經 *Wan hsiu-ts'ang-ching* [Supplement to the Buddhist Canon]. Taiwan: Hsin-wenfeng Pienshenpu, 1983.
- na Not Applicable. ZGS na or Shiba na indicates that a particular phrase does not occur in that text.
- Ryōkō-in A reading given by Kobori Nanrei, the former *oshō* of Ryōkō-in, Daitoku-ji.
- RZR §14 Section 14 of the *Rinzai-roku*, according to the section division in Akizuki Ryōmin 秋月龍珉, *Rinzai-roku* 臨濟錄 [Record of Rinzai]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1972. Burton Watson follows the same numbering system in *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*. (Boston: Shambhala, 1993). The *Rinzai-roku* is *Chinjū Rinzai Eshō Zenji*

- goroku* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄 (Ch. Chen-chou Lin-chi Hui-chao Ch'an-shih Yü-lu), T 47.495a–506c.
- Serenity* 從容錄 [Book of Serenity], Takasaki Jikishō 高崎直承, ed. (Tokyo: Kōmeisha, 1934). Citations refer to the English translation of Thomas Cleary, *Book of Serenity* (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1999).
- Shiba 14.124 Verse 124 of the 14-character verses in the revised modern version of *Zenrin kushū*, edited by Shibayama Zenkei 柴山全慶, *Kunchū zenrin kushū* 訓註禪林句集 [Annotated Zen Sangha Verse Collection] (Kyoto: Kichūdō, 1972). Do not confuse with ZRKS, which has exactly the same title.
- Shinjigen* 新字源 [Character Etymologies], Ogawa Tamaki 小川環樹 et al., eds. (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1968).
- Shōun-ji A reading or information given by Yasunaga Sōdō, the *oshō* of Shōun-ji in the city of Ikeda. Yasunaga Oshō completed the kōan training under Hirata Seikō Rōshi of Tenryū-ji.
- SRZGK §1743 Entry number 1743 (not page number 1743) of the *Shoroku zokugokai* 諸錄俗語解 [Explanation of Colloquial Language in Several Texts]. Yoshizawa Katsuhiko 芳澤勝弘, ed. (Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1999).
- T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 [Buddhist Canon Published in the Taishō Era] (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1934). T 47.519b refers to volume 47, page 519; a, b, and c refer to top, middle, and bottom thirds of the page.
- TSSSTS *Tōshisen santaishi sōgō sakuin* 唐詩選三体詩綜合索引 [Joint Index for the *Tōshisen* and *Santaishi*], produced by the Zen Bunka Kenkyūjo (Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1992).
- ZD#25 Verse 25 of the “Zen Phrase Anthology,” on pages 79–122 of *Zen Dust* by Miura Isshū and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *Zen Dust: The History of the Koan and Koan Study in Rinzaï (Lin-chi) Zen* (Kyoto: The First Zen Institute of America, 1966).
- ZD 25 Page 25 of *Zen Dust* above.
- ZGDJT *Zengaku daijiten* 禪學大辭典 [Lexicon of Zen Studies], edited by the Komazawa Daigaku Zengaku Daijiten Hensansho (Tokyo: Daishūkan, 1977).
- ZGJI *Zengo jii* 禪語字彙 [Zen Glossary] edited by Imai Fukuzan 今井福山 and Nakagawa Shūan 中川澁庵 (Tokyo: Hakurinsha, 1935).
- ZGJT *Zengo jiten* 禪語辭典 [Zen Word Dictionary] edited by Iriya



Yoshitaka 入矢義高 and Koga Hidehiko 古賀英彦 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1991).

ZGS 10.188 Phrase number 188 in the 10-character section of *Shinsan zengoshū* 新纂禪語集 [A New Compilation of the Zen Phrase Collection], edited by Tsuchiya Etsudō 土屋悦堂, compiled under the direction of Unkankutsu Shaku Taibi Rōshi 雲關窟釋大眉老師 (Kyoto: Kichūdō, 1973).

ZRKS 10.188 Phrase number 188 in the 10-character phrase section of *Zenrin kushū* (ZRKS). The term *Zenrin kushū* is frequently used as a generic term to refer to all Zen phrase collections, but in this book, ZRKS refers specifically to the *Zenrin kushū* 禪林句集 [Zen Sangha Phrase Collection] compiled in 1688 by Ijūshi 已十子 (Kyoto: Baiyō Shoin reprint). Do not confuse with the book carrying exactly the same title, *Zenrin kushū*, by Shibayama Zenkei (SHIBAYAMA 1972). This latter text is designated “Shiba.”